The *Essential* W. Carl Ketcherside

B. D. Lewis

2025

The

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W. Carl Ketcherside

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DEDICATION

***To Pat and Jeep Rice*,**
who introduced me to the writings of
W. Carl Ketcherside

PREFACE

Main Menu

The history of the Stone-Campbell restoration movement would not be complete without considering the life and work of William Carl Ketcherside (1908-1989). It is my hope that this book will facilitate that task.

As explained in the Postscript to this work, my interest in Carl Ketcherside's thinking began in 1970. Since that time, I have become increasingly convinced that the message he had to share continues to be of critical importance to those who are part of the Church of Christ stream of the Stone-Campbell restoration movement. But it also contains the key to the visible unity of all disciples of Jesus.

My original purpose in writing this book was to explain Ketcherside's thinking to those who were unfamiliar with his writings, giving special attention to those areas which were controversial among Churches of Christ. While that purpose was never abandoned, it was overlaid by a thesis formulated as a result of research into the relationship of Ketcherside's writings to those of the restoration fathers, whom he often quoted.

Since I needed to understand Ketcherside's early point of view— prior to 1956— the focus of my initial research was on identifying the source of that thinking. Was it Sommerism or original Ketchersidism, or did it originate before their time?

That line of inquiry eventually led me back to the early history of the movement, where views expressed by its founders were also to be found in Ketcherside's writings, both early and late.

It is in the writings of the fathers of the movement that one discovers, for example, that a clear distinction was made between the content of the *gospel* and that of *doctrine*, a distinction for which Ketcherside was later maligned. One also discovers that the fathers strongly opposed the paid, one-man *pastor system*— the position of Ketcherside and that of Churches of Christ throughout the nineteenth century. Furthermore, phrases like "*unity in diversity*" and "*brothers in embryo*" appeared in the writings of the Campbells and Richardson— long before they were made controversial by Carl Ketcherside.

One of the most significant discoveries in the writings of the restoration fathers, however, is the connotation they assigned to the word "opinion"— a connotation still unknown to many modern readers of their works. Recognizing what they consistently referred to by that word is the key to understanding the initial impact of the movement on early nineteenth-century America. It is also the key to understanding the extraordinary insight and foresight of Thomas Campbell in the principles upon which his unity proposal was based.

As I began to share the earliest drafts of my research findings with friends and former colleagues, it seemed imperative that I share quotations from the writings of the fathers of the movement upon which my conclusions were based. But that proved to be problematic— the modern reader is unfamiliar with the style and vocabulary of early nineteenth-century authors and their affinity for sentences of paragraph length and for paragraphs extending across multiple pages. Such reading is generally found palatable only by historians and other academicians.

However, finding no credible alternative more feasible than

including relevant excerpts from the fathers, I decided to summarize the longer quotations and place the originals in footnotes for the interested reader. Nevertheless, these primary sources remain indispensable for verifying the accuracy of my summaries and the validity of my conclusions.

Finally, it was Ketcherside's early demonstration that the *scriptures* have been *twisted* to support a divided church that first convinced me that he had a critical message to share. But merely pitting his exegesis of scripture against that of his opponents did not seem to me as convincing as presenting evidence, from primary sources, that Ketcherside— in clear contrast with his detractors— stood squarely in the tradition of the founders of the movement.

It was not Ketcherside but the heirs of the movement who deviated from its founding principles. And it is that deviation that he convincingly identifies as the root cause of *all* religious division, especially that by which the restoration movement has been repeatedly fragmented since 1889.

How This Book Came About

In 1996, Dr. David Reagan, founder of Lamb & Lion Ministries, suggested that a book about Ketcherside's thinking would be helpful to those unfamiliar with his writings. Given the significant impact of Ketcherside's thinking on my life, the idea appealed to me as a worthwhile undertaking.

The initial phase of this writing project involved the collection and digitization of Ketcherside's works. It began with the creation of a website to serve as a repository for his writings and recorded speeches, as well as for memorabilia related to his life and work. That aspect of the project was greatly accelerated through the tireless effort of Natalie Murrie, a retired college professor, who undertook the daunting task of digitizing

nineteen volumes of *Mission Messenger*, from 1956 through 1975. The project was also assisted by the invaluable effort of Glen Thompson, a retired aeronautical engineer from Albuquerque, New Mexico, who digitized a substantial number of Ketcherside's books (and all issues of *Restoration Review*— from 1959 through 1992— for the leroygarrett.org website).

Within a few years, all of Ketcherside's known works were available for free access on the Unity-in-Diversity.org website. However, there was no convenient way to read them until the introduction of the Kindle e-book, by Amazon, in late 2007, and the Nook Book by Barnes and Noble, in 2009. By 2011, all thirteen of Ketcherside's post-1955 books, plus his autobiography, were available in e-book format, along with works by Leroy Garrett, Thomas and Alexander Campbell, and Robert Richardson. These were published under the name Stone-Campbell e-Prints (initially, SCM e-Prints).

Subsequently, all of Ketcherside's pre-1956 writings were collected and digitized. Those works included the volumes of *Macedonian Call*, later *Spiritual Call*, edited by D. Austen Sommer. It was in Sommer's paper that Ketcherside's earliest essays appeared. This journal was acquired on microfilm, then converted to PDF format in order to make it searchable. That task was made possible primarily through the help of Steve Richardson, Coordinator of Reference Services at Furman University, now retired, who made their specialized facilities available for that purpose.

At about this same time, an electronic library was assembled, on a cloud server, containing almost all of the works of the pioneers of the movement. In that collection were the volumes of *Christian Messenger*, *Macedonian Call*, *Lard's Quarterly*, *Gospel Advocate*, and *Firm Foundation*, along with limited copies of other journals associated with the movement during the nineteenth century. It also included almost all of the major histories of the movement, along with other works

published through the time of Alexander Campbell's death (1866) and beyond. Many of these volumes were acquired through the assistance of staff members, past and present, of the Limestone University Library, to whom I am indebted.

By combining various collections into single PDF files, it became possible to conduct broad searches for any word or phrase in a variety of publications across decades of time— with the caveat that the accuracy of OCR (Optical Character Recognition) software does not usually exceed 98%. Having rapid and comprehensive access to these writings served as an invaluable asset in acquiring a comprehensive overview of the thinking of the early pioneers of the movement.

In the fall of 2011, I was privileged to spend several days conversing with Leroy Garrett, Ketcherside's closest associate in their quest for unity among the various streams of the Stone-Campbell Movement and beyond. Those conversations were invaluable in discovering facts about Ketcherside that were not apparent from other sources. Additional details of Ketcherside's life and work were derived from his personal letters, notebooks, and effects, made available by his children. Some of these may be found in the library archives of Abilene Christian University. Research notes and audio recordings of interviews with Ketcherside by Stanley McDaniel, may be found at the archives of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society, in Bethany, West Virginia.

The final phase of preparation for writing this book included multiple conversations with Ketcherside's family— his daughter, Sharon Sue, her husband, Curt Burton, and Ketcherside's son, Jerry. I also benefited from correspondence with Dwain Stoops of Nixa, Missouri, who was personally familiar with Ketcherside during his formative years. Dwain provided me with PDF copies of all of Ketcherside's books from that period, for which I am grateful. These were subsequently made available on the Unity-in-Diversity.org website.

Since this e-book was designed specifically for the Kindle e-book, the reader should be aware of certain limitations of the Kindle software, specifically in the way it displays footnotes.

If the user has selected "Continuous Scrolling" in the Layout settings, clicking or pressing on a footnote reference number will take the reader to the endnotes page where the complete footnote is found. Clicking or pressing on the footnote number while in the notes will return the reader to the place in the text where the footnote reference number occurs.

If the user has not selected "Continuous Scrolling" mode, clicking or pressing on a footnote reference number will cause the text of the footnote to be displayed in a pop-up window at the bottom of the page. Clicking the "x" on the window will hide the footnote window.

Since the Kindle e-book app is designed to display only short notes in the footnote window, footnotes in the window are often truncated, and additional paragraphs are simply not displayed (although the complete note is displayed in the endnotes page).

Consequently, to enable the display of multiple paragraphs in the footnote window, we devised a way to work around the built-in limitation of the Kindle app. However, our workaround is not able to offset the margins of a block quotes in footnotes. Instead, we have simply enclosed those block quotes in quotation marks and displayed them in a smaller size font, as was often the practice in nineteenth-century type-setting.

Finally, we have deviated from the norm of print publishing by inserting a blank space to the right of em dashes. This prevents large gaps in justified text, especially when screen sizes vary.

Notification of any errata found in the book would be welcome. Please address them to sc_eprints@icloud.com.

Comments on the content of the book are also welcome, but would be most helpful if posted as a review on its Amazon.com page.

B. D. Lewis
October 3, 2024

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION TO W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

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Introduction

For most of his life, William Carl Ketcherside was a controversial figure within the Stone-Campbell restoration movement, particularly among Churches of Christ and Independent Christian Churches. In his earlier years, he insisted on unity through conformity to his understanding of scripture. Later, he proposed a restoration of the principle of unity espoused by Thomas and Alexander Campbell which rejected doctrinal deductions as a test of fellowship— since such deductions accounted for nearly all division within the Christian community.

Ketcherside believed that the restoration movement, which began in 1809, started to fail the moment it was deceived into thinking that nothing more remained to be restored— that it had become the church of Christ on earth to the exclusion of all others who claimed to be part of Christ's spiritual body. While the founders of the movement pursued a vision of uniting the Christians in all the sects, their heirs eventually denied there were Christians in the sects.

Throughout the latter part of his career, Carl Ketcherside was frequently attacked by preachers and editors in mainline Churches of Christ, who perhaps saw his teaching as a threat to their influence. Although he believed that the heirs of the movement would soon recover its original restoration principle, it was nearly a decade after his death before the changes he foresaw began clearly to emerge.

The following examination of Carl Ketcherside's life and work is divided into three periods of analysis: The formative years (1908–1950), the transformative years (1951–56), and the definitive years (1957–1989). While these divisions are approximate, they correspond to key events in his life that marked significant shifts in the direction of his mission and message.

In 1995, Carol A. Schnaare Miller, a student at the Harding Graduate School of Religion, wrote a paper titled "W. Carl Ketcherside: A Messenger with a Message." She had first met Ketcherside at St. Louis Christian College, in 1976, where he delivered a chapel talk. In her paper, Miller presents an alternative framework for analyzing Ketcherside's life. She divides it into six "phases," each further subdivided into more specific segments. Below, her six phases are interwoven with my own three-period schema:

Formative Years
1. Sovereign Foundations/Foundations in Family and Faith
2. Inner-Life Growth/Developing Evangelist

Transformative Years
3. Ministry Maturing/ Broadening Influence
4. Life Maturing/Inner Transformation

Definitive Years
5. Convergence/ Reformation of Ministry
6. Afterglow/Deepening Maturity & Expanding Ministry

The Formative Years (1908–1950)

Ketcherside spent the first half of his life as the primary leader of a legalistic segment of Stone-Campbell churches with direct ties to Daniel Sommer. Just as the early life of Saul of Tarsus prepared him for ministry as Paul the apostle, the years Ketcherside spent defending Sommerite Church of Christism gave him unique insight into the mindset of those who would later benefit from the latter period of his life.

Overview

Ketcherside was a seminal thinker. He had a gift for what

is commonly called thinking "outside the box"— that is, beyond the limitations of the cultural and ecclesiastical contexts in which he lived. Although his formal education beyond high school did not exceed two years of business college, he was an avid reader from early childhood. As a young boy, he took books with him to work in the field and spend his lunch breaks reading.[1]

When he was eight years old, the Ketcherside family relocated to Marshalltown, Iowa, where he encountered the first public library he had ever seen. Regarding that experience he later wrote:

> **I read a book per day and sometimes more. A free library opened up for me a great new world in which I stuffed my mind like a hungry urchin would his stomach at a picnic.[2]**

He was a diligent student of history, but he was equally well-read and proficient in literature, philosophy, and theology — although he had no use for the specialized jargon of the theologian. He believed the scriptures to be supernaturally inspired by God and that the canon of Scripture was closed upon the death of John, the author of the Revelation. He looked to no other source of authority or guidance for his conduct and teaching.

Although he described the purpose and direction of his life in a variety of terms, it may be best summarized, perhaps, by a dictum he often repeated for the last twenty years of his life: "renewal through the recovery of the apostolic proclamation, purpose, and power."

Ketcherside was convinced that a proper recognition of the significance scripture assigns to our differing views of Scripture would put an end to doctrinal wrangling among brethren. However, the end of factionalism, he believed, would come only when brethren became aware of and submitted to the inward imperative of divine love, poured into the heart of the believer

through the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5). He expressed this conviction in August of 1967:

> **"I base my hope for the unity of God's people wholly and unreservedly upon love. There is no other power by which God's purpose can be achieved. There is no other potential for answering the prayer of Christ. It is love or nothing!"[3]**

Ketcherside did not believe that the new covenant scriptures constitute a "new law" from God. Rather, he regarded them as letters written in response to specific difficulties, intended to explain— to people who lived at a specific time and under specific cultural circumstances— how divine love would behave in those circumstances. He believed the "royal law" to be the law of divine love— the law of Christ, the law of the Spirit of life. Spiritual fellowship, he argued, consists in sharing God's Spirit of love, the sharing of the life of God, and is not something that can be extended or withdrawn by men. Of the new covenant he wrote: "Our covenant is a person. He is engraved upon our hearts as our signet. He dwells in our hearts by faith."[4] Salvation, he would say, does not result from obedience to law but from an acceptance of the free gift of God by faith— evidenced as genuine by a penitent heart and a submissive attitude, demonstrated through humble submission to immersion in water.

The Beginning of Public Ministry

Ketcherside's autobiography describes his advent into the world as occurring "early in the morning of May 10, 1908, in a little two-room miner's cabin in a poverty-stricken village called Cantwell, nestled in the eastern foothills of the Missouri Ozarks."[5] As an infant, he was presented by his mother for christening by a Lutheran clergyman of the Missouri Synod. At age twelve, however, he made a personal profession of faith and

was immersed by Jesse Jackson, a beloved elder of the local Church of Christ. Shortly thereafter, Ketcherside preached his first sermon, marking the beginning of a sixty-nine-year career as an evangelist, teacher, debater, missionary, and journalist.

For the next thirty-seven years, Ketcherside was aligned with a narrow, legalistic sect within one of the three major factions spawned by a failing unity movement. His rise to leadership within that segment of Churches of Christ, strongly influenced by the teaching of Daniel Sommer, was swift. He soon became the chief defender and apologist for those who shared his views. A skilled debater, he admittedly enjoyed the "heady excitement of combat in the forensic arena." By the time he became convinced of the detriment of debating to the cause for which Jesus died, he had debated most of "the recognized gladiators of that era."

In 1928, Ketcherside was holding a meeting in Flat River, Missouri, where he met "Nellie Watts," whom he described as "a raven-haired, brown-eyed beauty, whose simple charm swept me off my feet and left my mind reeling." It seemed to be love at first sight, and on June 24, 1928, Carl and Nell were married.

On November 7, the Ketchersides set up housekeeping for the first time in Nevada, Missouri, which they called home for the next eight and a half years. During that time, their family grew with the birth of Sharon Sue and Gerald (Jerry) Bernard. Then, on June 3, 1937, three months after Ketcherside's debate with Porter, they moved to St. Louis, where they remained for the rest of their lives.

The Macedonian Call

The writing career of Carl Ketcherside began with correspondence with his bride-to-be. During their courtship, he wrote to her every day, sometimes twice, and even printed "a

little sixteen-page quarterly dedicated just to her."[6] The pages were filled with romantic overtures, poetry, and drawings, all designed to remind and assure his betrothed of his undying devotion to her.

The first published essays of Carl Ketcherside were likely those that appeared in the *Macedonian Call,* edited by D. Austin Sommer.[7] Ketcherside came to prominence through the pages of Sommer's paper with the publication of "The Rough Draft— Its Sponsors— Also Its Outworkings— Why We Are Against It,"[8] to which Ketcherside's name was appended as one of its sixteen co-signatories. Ironically, the "rough draft," as it was called by those who opposed it, was a proposal for restoring peace and unity between factions of Churches of Christ.

What was referred to by its opponents as the "Rough Draft" was an article titled "Can't We Agree on Something?" published by the *Apostolic Review* in June of 1932. Prior to that date, the *Review* had declared non-fellowship with those who supported and approved of Bible colleges. However, the Rough Draft proposed that, so long as financial support of the colleges was limited to individual contributions— not from the church treasury— there should be no break in fellowship with such individuals.

In describing the Rough Draft controversy years later, Ketcherside observed that "the statement was somewhat innocuous and tame when looked at in retrospect, but it became explosive in the atmosphere in which it was launched."[9]

Two years later, another article appeared in the *Macedonian Call* in which Ketcherside collaborated. It was titled "A Defense Against the Supreme Effort of the Apostolic Review to Crush Carl Ketcherside, D. A. Sommer and The Macedonian Call."[10]

In his later years, Ketcherside lamented the schismatic role

he played in opposing the Rough Draft:

> **Our action served to create another schism in an already divided movement. It also doomed the exclusivistic Sommer faction to death. Our actions were injudicious and our reactions unwarranted. I was wrong in what I did. A lot of things I wrote and said in the time of tension were absurd. I do not try to excuse them on the basis of youthful immaturity. I was sectarian in attitude and filled with pharisaic pride. I helped to create another arrogant and hostile party even though I acted in all good conscience. That I became a recognized leader in it was a tribute to my dogmatism and aggressiveness. I am ashamed of both of them. They only added to the sin.**
>
> **If we had regarded the so-called "Rough Draft" as merely another newspaper article and allowed people to read it for themselves without trying to inject political prejudice into their minds it would not have caused a ripple. . . .**[11]

In the March 1959 issue of the *American Christian Review*, **Ketcherside published "A Statement of Fact." Regarding that article he later wrote:**

> **It was an apology for my actions in elevating "the Rough Draft," written in 1932, to a test of fellowship. I had reached the conclusion there was but one creed, the Lord Jesus Christ. To elevate an editorial statement of opinion into a test of union or communion was as absurd as it was wrong.**[12]

From 1935 to 1946, at least eighty articles by Ketcherside were published in the *Macedonian Call*.[13] **During this period his name appeared frequently throughout the paper in reports of his work, as his influence within that segment of the Sommerite brotherhood grew rapidly.**

Although Ketcherside began publishing his own paper in 1940, his articles continued to appear in the *Macedonian Call* **for**

six more years. However, sometime between 1946 and 1947, something occurred that alienated D. A. Sommer and Carl Ketcherside.[14] The last article by Ketcherside to be published in the *Macedonian Call* appeared in July 1947, titled "The Common People."[15] It was a reprint from the November 1946 issue of *Missouri Mission Messenger*.

The last time Ketcherside's name appeared in the *Macedonian Call* was in the June 1949 issue, in an article by Sommer titled "Lording Over God's Heritage." The editor takes issue with Ketcherside's interpretation of 2 Peter 3:16, as set forth in his article, "Whose Heritage," published in the June 1949 issue of *Mission Messenger*. Sommer asks: "Are these men, Elder E. M. Zerr and Editor W. Carl Ketcherside, wresting the scriptures to their own destruction, by trying to shield their own practice and endorsement which is condemned so plainly by Apostle Peter?"

Sommer continued to publish his paper through July of 1952, passing from this life on July 8 of that year. He and Ketcherside were never reconciled. Regarding those years, Ketcherside reflected:

> Before it was all over, Brother D. Austen Sommer, motivated by fear of the growing popularity of *Mission Messenger*, which I published, became increasingly hostile to my work and refused even to meet with me to effect a reconciliation.[16]

Four days before Sommer's death, Ketcherside concluded his first debate with G. K. Wallace near Paragould, Arkansas, where he met Leroy Garrett for the first time.

Missouri Mission Messenger

As his scope of activity and influence increased, Ketcherside began publishing the *Missouri Mission Messenger* in

January of 1940. Its primary purpose was to serve to chronicle activities within the state where he resided for the party with which he was aligned. As circulation grew, announcements of purely local interest were replaced by more general and international content, since the paper was being received each month by dozens of service personnel worldwide. Wishing at the time to avoid the appearance of competing with other publications, the editor wrote in early 1945:

> **The paper has a small circulation but is self-supporting! We want to keep it that way. It is essentially a newspaper, and will not encroach on either the Macedonian Call or the News of Western Churches. As a matter of fact, if you can take only two papers, we prefer that you take the other two, for they give you helpful articles on Christian living![17]**

Nevertheless, the paper continued to grow in both circulation and geographical reach. While its content remained largely focused on announcements and reports of church activities, articles of a didactic or admonitory nature began appearing regularly with the July 1945 issue, the first being titled "Statement on Conviction."[18]

Upon returning from his first trip to Great Britain in the spring of 1946 (see below), Ketcherside changed the paper's masthead with the July issue. As its coverage expanded beyond Missouri, it became appropriate to remove the geographical designation, a change that took effect with the January 1949 issue. From that point forward, it was simply called *Mission Messenger*. A new masthead was introduced at the beginning of 1955 and remained in use until its publication ceased in 1975.

Early Outlook

Ketcherside grew up in a segment of Churches of Christ that was strongly influenced by the views of Daniel Sommer, editor of the *Apostolic Review* and the first evangelist Ketcherside ever heard. To the seven-year-old Ketcherside, Sommer was "an imposing figure, sixty-five years old, and priding himself upon his physical strength and endurance."[19]

Of his childhood Ketcherside intimates:

> **It was into the segment of "the disciple brotherhood" represented by the *Apostolic Review* [that] I was introduced when baptized. At the time I did not know there were others. I supposed, in my childhood idealism, that all Christians were together, united in a common bond of faith, and that wherever you saw a meetinghouse with "Church of Christ" over the door you would find a welcome and a hand of fellowship to cheer you.[20]**

On August 18, 1889, nearly two decades before Ketcherside was born, Sommer read his "Address and Declaration" to the church at Sand Creek, near Windsor, Illinois.

> **In it he called for withdrawal from those who endorsed and condoned the church holding festivals to raise money, select choirs to do the singing, man-made societies for missionary work, and the one-man imported preacher-pastor system. He could quote from memory his closing sentence, "If they do not turn away from such abominations, we can not and will not regard them as brethren."[21]**

It was the Sand Creek declaration that set the parameters for orthodoxy for a large segment of Churches of Christ,[22] and for the keen mind of the young Ketcherside in particular. It was upon Ketcherside that his mentor had hoped his mantle would fall.

The Existence of Orphan Homes and Bible Colleges— **Among**

Ketcherside's early views was his opposition to any institution involving itself in the work assigned specifically to the local congregation of the church. Reflecting the teaching of Daniel Sommer, Ketcherside believed that the Church is the only legitimate avenue for carrying out religious work. By extension, all other institutions established for this purpose were to be opposed. This issue was at the heart of Ketcherside's earliest debate, in 1937, with Rue Porter. The propositions for that debate clearly delineate the nature of the controversy.

> **The erection and maintenance of schools or colleges, such as Abilene Christian College, David Lipscomb College, and others of like character, for purpose of teaching the Bible and other branches of learning in connection, is contrary to the New Testament, and should be opposed as an innovation in the church.—** *Ketcherside affirmed*.[23]

> **The erection and maintenance of orphans homes, such as Tipton Orphans Home, Southern Christian Home, and others of like character, for the purpose of housing and otherwise caring for orphan children, is authorized by the New Testament scriptures.—** *Ketcherside denied*.[24]

In his first negative of the debate, Ketcherside took the following position:

> **The church has no right to do anything as a church, that God has not commanded the church to do. Nor does a Christian have the right to do through another organization that which God has commanded the church as such, to do.**[25]

At the time of the debate, Ketcherside regarded these matters as tests of fellowship, in line with the Sand Creek declaration and his later opposition to the "Rough Draft."

*Mutual Ministry vs the One-Man Pastor System***— Since his earliest days, Ketcherside was accustomed to a form of**

edification for the gathered community of faith known as "mutual ministry." The biblical basis for such a practice is found in Paul's admonition to the Thessalonians: "Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, just as indeed you are doing" (1 Thess. 5:11, LEB). A similar idea is expressed in the letter to the Hebrews: ". . . not abandoning our meeting together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging each other, and by so much more as you see the day drawing near" (Heb. 10:25, LEB). These statements formed the foundation for the concept of mutual ministry, particularly regarding edification or teaching (see Garrett's fuller definition below).

As observed earlier, it was under the influence of Daniel Sommer that Ketcherside came to oppose the system under which a single individual was hired to be the professional edifier of the congregation. The term "minister," he argued, applied to all members of the congregation. Elevating one minister in status the others, allowing him to dominate the public teaching and admonition of the church, was a practice that simply could not be found in scripture. A return to the ancient order of things required that all who were capable of edifying the congregation should have the opportunity to do so. The creation of a new office, that of "preacher," which is not found in the new covenant scriptures, was seen as an innovation and a digression from the old paths.[26]

***Close Communion*— During his first trip to the British Isles, Ketcherside became acquainted with the beliefs and practices of restoration-minded churches in Britain, which differed with those in the United States. One such difference was the practice of "close communion." This practice excludes the unimmersed from the Lord's Supper and takes steps to prevent them from partaking. In contrast, "open communion" makes no effective effort to "protect" the Table from the unimmersed. Instead, it involves teaching on the subject and allowing individuals to decide for themselves whether they are qualified to partake.**

In February of 1948, less than a year after returning from his second trip to the British Isles, Ketcherside wrote:

> **I have studied the position of the brethren in Great Britain long and earnestly. I am convinced that they are right, and I shall be prepared to defend the position which has been theirs through the years, not because it is theirs or mine, but because I believe it is the position of God's Word. . . . I would have it understood that I do not propose to dictate to the churches what method they shall pursue to guarantee that the Lord's Table shall be reserved only and absolutely to the Lord's people.[27]**

Over the years, however, Ketcherside was not known to insist upon his views in this regard in any of the churches with which he was associated.[28]

The Role of Women— **Writing in 1946 about the role of women in the church, Ketcherside quoted a statement by Daniel Sommer:**

> **"If a woman would sing, pray or read the Sacred Writings, or exhort in the public assembly, doing so under the supervision of the men appointed as leaders of the church, she most certainly would be within the bounds of the Scriptures."[29]**

To this Ketcherside added:

> **In the above, Brother Sommer has stated our views exactly. And in view of that, we suggest that the congregations in many places have drawn unscriptural lines, which did not obtain in the early New Testament church.[30]**

This same view appears to have been corroborated by Ketcherside four years later when he wrote in an article addressed to John Allen Hudson:

> **My personal views on women's work are best set forth in a recent book, *Rules for Bible Study*, by Dr. Carroll Kendrick. . . . I commend unto him pages 51-61 of that book.[31]**

In that same book, Kendrick states:

> **. . . the right of women to pray in the assembly was not questioned. Nothing but the manner of doing so was questioned, and as this was not a material error, Paul would not very earnestly urge its correction. Had it been wrong for women to pray in the assembly, Paul would have settled the case by saying so; . . .[32]**

Kendrick continues:

> **There is, in the two passages under consideration, nothing to hinder women from being preachers! Look closely, and see. Yet we conclude, with great confidence, that they should not be preachers because they were not in the days of the apostles. This is a sufficient prohibition. Hence, while a woman may perhaps make a talk on special occasions, may be a missionary aid, may teach in any orderly and becoming way, etc., she cannot be what we usually call a preacher or an evangelist, pastor or ruler in the church, so long as we follow the apostolic and ancient examples, as we are commanded to do.[33]**

Yet Ketcherside was never known to deviate from the practice of the churches in this regard, where women generally remained silent, except in their participation in congregational singing.

Racism and Segregation— **Nearly two years before** *Brown v. Board of Education* **(May 17, 1954), and over three years before Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to a white man on a Montgomery, Alabama, city bus (December 1, 1955), Carl Ketcherside wrote:**

> **All members of God's family have a right to sit at**

his table— at the same table! "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). The unity in the anointed Saviour forbids any national distinction (Jew or Greek); any social distinction (bond or free); or any sexual distinction (male or female). The apostle again says, "Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all, and in all" (Col. 3:11). Racial segregation, and narrow nationalism, can only be nurtured in unregenerate hearts where selfishness, fear, and vanity crowd out Christ. When Christ is all and in all, these things must disappear.

. . . It is begging the question to say that we may be one body and still be divided into segregated groups on the basis of race, color or social status. . . . The use of such terms as "colored churches," "white churches," etc., is a vivid testimonial to our digression from the intent and purpose of Him who is the Father of us all. . . . The use of such terms as "colored churches," "white churches," etc., is a vivid testimonial to our digression from the intent and purpose of Him who is the Father of us all.[34]

Two years later, Ketcherside echoed this same conviction when he wrote:

> **Segregation of God's children and our brethren on the basis of color or race is so opposed to the spirit of God's revelation that those who are guilty of its advocacy can by no stretch of imagination be acceptable unto our God. Segregation in a democracy which is built upon the foundation that all men are created equal is a travesty upon justice, a political farce and a crucifixion of human rights. In the kingdom of heaven it is a tragic betrayal of God's Son, a denial of heaven's truth, an outgrowth of palpable hypocrisy and pious pretense, and a spiritual blight destroying the vintage in God's vineyard.[35]**

While racial segregation was never the catalyst for a formal

division among members of Churches of Christ, Ketcherside's strong opposition to it serves as an indication— among many others— of the seminal nature of his thinking and the formative impact of scripture upon his heart.[36]

The Debates (1937–1955)

Ketcherside was not only a skillful writer but also a formidable debater, at a time when members of Churches of Christ viewed debates as an effective way to settle disputes over the interpretation of biblical texts.

Ketcherside's first debate took place in 1937 with Rue Porter of Neosho, Missouri. Porter was nearly 48 years old, while Ketcherside was not yet 29. His final debate, with William Taylor, occurred near Bay, Arkansas, in March 1955.

In his four-volume *Encyclopedia of Religious Debates* **(published privately in 2019), Thomas Thrasher lists ten debates involving Ketcherside. However, I have not been able to confirm any debate with Jones (in 1922, when Ketcherside would have been 14 years old), Bailey (circa 1955) or Barber. The Fenton debate, referenced by Thrasher, was not actually a debate, and Thrasher overlooked the 1955 debate with William Taylor near Bay, Arkansas.**

Over a period of eighteen years, Ketcherside engaged in at least nine public debates. A tenth debate, with Watson in St. Louis, could not be confirmed by any source other than a single statement by Ketcherside, in which he claimed to have debated Watson in St. Louis:

Porter (1937)
Watson (1938
Watson (?)
Totty (1941)

Brewer (1946)
Brewer (1947)
Wallace (1952)
Wallace (1953)
Colley (1953)
Taylor (1955)

To my knowledge, only four of the above debates were ever published as books: the debate with Porter, the two with Wallace, and the debate with Colley.

Ketcherside's debates focused on three main topics: (1) church support of orphan homes (Porter and Watson), (2) the right of Bible colleges to exist (Porter, Watson, Totty, Brewer, and Wallace), and (3) the pastor system (Wallace and Colley). Of the fourteen propositions debated, eight concerned the college issue, three addressed the pastor system, two dealt with orphan home support, and one— debated only once, with Taylor in 1955 — questioned the legitimacy of the modern eldership.

From Ketcherside's point of view, Bible colleges came into existence primarily for the purpose of training a professional clergy. Consequently, in his mind, abolishing the clergy system would lead to the immediate demise of the Bible colleges. As he wrote, about half-way through his debating career:

> **I am opposed to every human organization set up to prepare a "special ministry" for the church, but the principles involved are closely related to the subject with which we have been dealing [the one-man pastor system]. If you stop the professional clergy idea you will bring to an end the organizations created to spawn them. When you quit contracting for the chickens, the hatchery will close. . . . I have repeatedly been challenged to discuss proposals dealing with these controversial issues. I am ready to do that with representative men whose spirit and conduct demonstrates that they are desirous of arriving at the truth on these issues. I will not debate with those who wish**

> **to indulge or engage in a "cat and dog fight." . . . Truth has nothing to fear! If I am proven wrong, I will get right! I have no desire for victory over any man. I have an intense desire to know the truth, for the Book declares that "ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."[37]**

Although Ketcherside's views of those issues he opposed in public debate seem never to have changed, his perspective on his relationship with those who held opposing views underwent radical change in the years that followed.[38]

First Trip Abroad [39]

In 1943, Ketcherside began corresponding with Albert Winstanley, of Lancashire, England. From of that exchange came an invitation for Ketcherside to visit the British Isles to further discuss the work of the church in America. When the proposal was presented to the elders and churches in the St. Louis area, the Church in Hartford, Illinois, responded enthusiastically, urging an effort to establish closer ties with the churches in that part of the world.[40] Others soon joined Hartford in supporting the idea, and it was decided early on that Ketcherside's wife, Nell, should accompany him on the trip to assist in an administrative capacity.[41]

Given the political climate of early 1947— less than a year and a half after the end of World War II— the State Department initially expressed doubt that the British Government would be willing to grant Ketcherside a visa at that time. The British Consul, however, suggested that apply to His Majesty's Passport Approval Bureau, which ultimately agreed to grant a visa for travel through the United Kingdom. Wishing to avoid the high cost of flying and having been advised by the Cunard Steamer Lines that there was "a waiting list a mile long," Ketcherside contacted the American Express Company. When they notified him that the *Queen Elizabeth*— the world's

largest ship at that time— would be available for their departure date, he made reservations and was confirmed for stateroom D-250. They departed New York harbor on February 20 and arrived at Southampton, on the southern coast of England, on February 25. The following day they disembarked and traveled by train to London.

For the next sixty-five days, the Ketchersides traveled through England, Scotland, and Ireland, residing as guests in the homes of numerous brothers and sisters in Christ and visiting the churches throughout the British Isles. During that time, Ketcherside became acquainted with the teaching and practices of the British churches and shared with his hosts how things were done back home. He was gratified to learn that the churches in the Isles generally adhered to a system of mutual ministry, a practice he had long advocated. He was introduced to the practice of "close communion," which he later became convinced was biblical.

While Ketcherside found himself in harmony with the British churches throughout most of his tour, friction arose on several occasions over his non-pacifist position. The memory of bombs falling on their homes was still fresh in the minds of those who had survived the war, and the ruins remained visible as stark reminders of the devastation.

Many among the British churches considered opposition to carnal warfare a condition for Christian fellowship. But Ketcherside's disarming manner of dealing with his opposers— choosing simply to disagree rather than to be disagreeable— helped bridge their differing views and allowed them to focus on the things about which they agreed.

In the June issue of *Missouri Mission Messenger*— the first edition since February— Ketcherside wrote:

> **"On the morning of May 9, the majestic Queen Elizabeth nosed into Pier 90, at the foot of 50th Street,**

> **New York, and for me there came to an end one of the most thrilling experiences of Christian fellowship in all of my life. . . .”[42]**

The Ketcherside’s arrived at Union Station in St. Louis on May 10, the day Ketcherside celebrated his 39th birthday.

During his trip abroad, Ketcherside established many lifelong friendships, some of which led to frequent correspondence over the years. Several of these individuals subsequently contributed to *Mission Messenger*. Of greater significance, however, is the fact that his first trip to the British Isles set the stage for another just four years later, during which he was to undergo a life-changing experience of striking proportions.

It should be noted that prior to his 1947 trip to the British Isles, efforts were made to discredit him with the British churches. In his autobiography, Ketcherside recalled:

> **When it was announced publicly that I planned to make the visit to the United Kingdom at the invitation of the brethren, it apparently created consternation in the ranks of the “mainline” Churches of Christ in the United States. They resolved to thwart it at all costs. The political propaganda machines were turned on full blast. All who had any relationship with congregations in Great Britain, especially American servicemen who had been stationed there, were urged to write and insist that my visit be cancelled. It was decided that the one person best qualified to offset any influence I might exert was John Allan Hudson.[43]**

The above appears to be confirmed by correspondence from F. C. Day of Birmingham, England:

> **Brother John Allan Hudson has written to say he is flying over here— to be in Britain before you arrive. I**

> **thought I ought to tell you this, so that you should be prepared. Yesterday I learned that he had decided to come to Britain (supported by churches in the U. S.) for twelve months. This was to be from April onwards, but apparently on hearing of your proposed visit, he decided to come earlier. You may draw your own conclusions from this. But I do want you to know that it will in no way interfere with your visit, or upset the arrangements I have in hand. There is much I want to discuss with you regarding Bro. Hudson's visit, and we shall be able to talk it over thoroughly while you are here.**[44]

However, Ketcherside appears to have said nothing further regarding Hudson's visit.

The Transformative Years (1951–56)

The period from 1951 through 1956 was one of radical growth and development in Carl Ketcherside's thinking. Although the transformation did not occur suddenly, it is evident in the progressive tone and content of his articles in *Mission Messenger* **during this time.**

Prior to his second trip abroad in 1951 (see below), Ketcherside wrote an essay that was published after his arrival in Ireland. In it, he cautioned:

> **Today the flames of a peculiar sin are eating away at the body, the church. But there seems to be no consciousness of the fact. . . . The condition which attacks the church today can best be diagnosed by giving its true name— *hate*. . . . Its trademark is "They say!" its trusted servant is "Have you heard?" and its faithful handmaiden is "Don't tell anyone— but! . . . Preachers of the gospel are not immune to this vicious plague. . . . So far are they beneath the plane of Christ's teaching on brotherly love that they try to claw themselves to prestige on the errors (sometimes *supposed*) of others, rather than upon their**

> **own righteousness. . . . Why does such a condition exist among those who should be examples of kindness, mercy, and longsuffering? I conclude that it is because we have missed the very basis, the *essence* of pure Christianity. For it we have substituted a cold, legalistic approach to God.[45]**

Reminding his readers that "the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart," he noted:

> **"And it is at this point we have failed. . . . What value is man's religion if he claims to be "champion of orthodoxy" and yet takes sneaking, unfair advantage of those with whom he has long labored? . . . Must we be disagreeable merely because we disagree. . . . We need men who can hate evil and love the man who does it. . . . Let's lift the stone from our brother's path, and not hurl it at him! This is the end of the commandment![46]**

Less than a month after publishing the above, Ketcherside would come face-to-face with his own misdirections of the heart.

Second Trip Abroad[47]

In November of 1950, an announcement of Ketcherside's second trip to the UK appeared in *Mission Messenger*.[48] He had received an invitation to return to Ireland and work with the church on Berlin Street in Belfast. In his absence, his daughter, Sharon Sue,[49] was to assume his editorial duties, and a full account of his work was to be provided through the columns of the paper.

On February 8, Ketcherside took leave of his family in St. Louis and traveled by train to New York, from where he departed aboard the *S. S. America*, "the largest and fastest ship ever built in the United States," arriving at Cobh, on the southern coast of Ireland, early on February 16. Leaving Cobh by train, with a stop at Cork, he arrived in Belfast, at 7:45 P.M.,

where he was met by a chorus of voices singing "For Christ and the Church." Starting in Belfast, he began an intense period of teaching and preaching in various locations in Northern Ireland.

On Easter Monday, March 26, Ketcherside met with sixty-five others at the Berlin Street meeting house, where they boarded two chartered busses and set out on a trip to Ahorey, "the little village from whence Thomas Campbell set out for the New World" and "where Alexander Campbell spent his early boyhood." Standing in the pulpit where Thomas Campbell, the "Prophet of Union," had stood over a century and a half before, he read from Ephesians 2: "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us." He later recalled that, for the rest of the day, "the expression 'He is our peace' kept rising to the surface of my consciousness, to be repeated silently."

The Knock at the Door

March 27, 1951, was one of the most significant days in the life of Carl Ketcherside. On that day, he had what he describes as a "life-changing experience," destined to alter the entire philosophy of his relationship to the kingdom of heaven and the future direction of his mission and message.[50] The previous day, he had spoken to his travel companions at the Presbyterian meetinghouse. After returning to Belfast that night, he began to experience a deep sense of loneliness and an awareness of the sectarian spirit in which he had sometimes gloried. In his autobiography, he describes the experience:

> **As I stumbled along through the deepening snow, alone in a foreign city, I found myself weeping and praying and making promises to God of what I would do if my life was spared through His grace. The word grace came like a ray of hope and I rolled it on my tongue like a juicy morsel. What I needed to make life worth living, to**

> overcome my frustration, to rise above the futility of my own efforts was grace. In all of my forty-three years no other thought had ever struck me with such force.[51]

After spending a sleepless night wrestling with his own thoughts, the dawn found him empty and drained, with a feeling of helplessness. "Every dream of my life had vanished," he wrote. "Every ship of hope I had launched lay in broken pieces upon the rocks of my own past." He then tells how he went downstairs and sat before the little hearth, with its one lump of rationed coal, and picked up his Bible. Without design, he began reading at verse one of Revelation. As he read, he recalls:

> I became aware that thoughts were leaping from the pages which I had read so often and taking lodgment in my benumbed brain. It was fascinating to have words come alive and to see their souls separate from the characters which the typesetter had given them as bodies, and free themselves from the prison of print to take up abode in my mind.[52]

As he continued reading, he came to the letter addressed to the community of believers at Laodicea. In that letter he began to see himself and those whom he had been leading. And it was there, he says, that he saw the answer he had been seeking: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Although he had come to Jesus over thirty-one years before, he acknowledged that he had never once invited Jesus to come in. But this time, he writes,

> I heard his knock! I heard His voice! I am not talking about audible impressions or things like sound waves or reverberation. It was too deep "for sound or foam," as the poet said.[53]

Later in the day,[54] he caught a bus and rode over to the little meetinghouse on the corner of Berlin and Paris Streets. As he sat on a pew in the dimly lit space, he says:

> **I realized that I had been tracked down and brought to bay by 'the hound of heaven.' It must have been an hour I sat there with the cold seeking the openings in the fibers of my clothing. At last I kneeled down and spoke: "This is it! I have come to the end of the road and I'm opening the door! Come in!" Immediately He did exactly what He promised He would do, and I knew it! There were no hot flashes, no hair standing on end, no goose-pimples, no spinal chills, no "speaking in tongues." There was none of that.**
>
> **But there was the indescribable feeling of the rightness of all things, the possession of a peace which transcended human rationality and understanding.[55]**

Years later, Ketcherside would reflect on the radical nature of the transformation he was to undergo in the years that followed. He first summarizes his outlook prior to Belfast:

> **It was great to know that you were in the congregation which had restored "the new testament faith and practice" without addition, subtraction, or modification. You were with the only people on earth who really spoke where the Bible spoke and remained silent where it was silent. It was thrilling to realize that if Paul came back and could locate us, which would take some doing, he would worship with us in a sense of deep contentment that things had not changed one iota since he wrote to the Thessalonians. . . .[56]**

Then, under the subheading "The Great Awakening," he continues:

> **Then my little paradise caved in! The Holy Spirit bombed me out of my little air-conditioned, two-by-four heaven. Before it happened I thought that we were rich, and increased with goods and had need of nothing. Then I saw that I was blind, and miserable, and poor and naked! And I mean miserable! I groped for the mental eye salve and rubbed it on. And I began to see. For the first time in**

my life I really began to see! And it was frightening. I dug into the revelation like never before. Every passage I had used to justify division I had misused. I had applied them to situations which the Spirit of God had never intended. I had used the written word to undo the very purpose of the Living Word. I had attempted to bind God with the commands He gave to bind me.[57]

On March 30, Ketcherside left Belfast for Ulverston, England, where he was met by Walter Crosthwaite, editor of *The Christian Standard*, whom he had met on his first trip to the British Isles. He wrote: "My return to this city is an answer to frequent prayers that I might again meet Bro. Crosthwaite whose life and fidelity have been an inspiration to me."[58] On April 3, Ketcherside traveled to Wigan, England, where he was met by Albert Winstanley, who was soon to make regular contributions to *Mission Messenger*. On April 9, he returned to Ireland where he continued his evangelistic work for the next four weeks.

On May 10, Ketcherside's 43rd birthday was celebrated with a fishing trip and a birthday tea in the McLarson home. On May 12, he traveled to Cobh, where Nell would arrive the next day. Here is how he described the event as follows:

> **After a night at Hotel Commodore in Cobh, I arose early on the morning of May 14 to await the arrival of the tender bringing passengers from the *America* which must anchor about 4 miles out. Every minute seemed an hour, but finally my heart was thrilled to see the one who for 23 years has been my greatest comfort and joy. It is by reason of the willingness of Nell to sacrifice that I can carry on my work for Him whom we both love. I had not seen her for more than 3 months and to feel again her kiss upon my lips, after her 4000 mile journey, was compensation for all loneliness. I owe more to this beloved one than I could ever repay. How wonderful to have her by my side on the long ride back to Belfast. When we arrived at the station, we heard the familiar strains of "The Lord's My Shepherd."**

> **It is Nell's favorite hymn, and the members were out in force to greet her. All of the train crews halted to hear them sing.**

On the 17th, they left Belfast and traveled to Scotland, where they remained for the next eighteen days crossing into northern England on May 28. Their time in England lasted just over two weeks.

On June 13, the Ketchersides left Tunbridge Wells, Kent, for London, where they spent the day at the World's Fair. That evening, they took the boat train to Harwich, a port on the North Sea coast of southeastern England, and boarded a steamer, from which they disembarked the following morning in the Hook of Holland. Over the next few days, they toured historical sites in Holland, Belgium, and France. Then, boarding a ship at Le Havre in northwestern France, they sailed back to New York, arriving on Monday, June 30.

The Winfield Meeting

Although Ketcherside had experienced a radical change in outlook during his trip to Ireland, he had yet to understand where that change would lead. For the next six years, the development of his thinking would be informed and accelerated by (1) an intense reading of the early fathers of the Stone-Campbell unity project, and (2) his close interaction with Leroy Garrett, the first student ever to be admitted to the Ph.D. program at Harvard without a high school diploma. The latter event was perhaps the second most significant event in Ketcherside's life, following his Belfast experience.

The last night of what came to be called the "Cow Pasture Debate" with G. K. Wallace took place on July 1, 1952— one year after Ketcherside's return from the British Isles. It was on that night that he was introduced to Leroy Garrett. They had

corresponded but had never met. They soon forged a lifelong friendship and quickly became allies in what ultimately became their fight against the sectarian spirit that had come to characterize the heirs of the Stone-Campbell restoration movement.[59]

It was called the "Cow Pasture Debate" because it was held in a cow pasture about five miles north of Paragould, Arkansas. Among those in attendance were students from David Lipscomb College. After the first night, they called Garrett and urged him to come to the debate. Of their meeting, Ketcherside later wrote:

> **One of the greatest blessings which came to me during the debate was to meet Leroy Garrett. . . . He deeply impressed me when I first shook hands with him. We held much in common but we also differed in our concepts regarding many items.[60]**

Eleven days prior to the debate, Garrett received a letter from Ketcherside. It was their first contact. In it, Ketcherside noted how "our thinking runs along the same line" regarding certain matters.[61]

Following the debate, Ketcherside responded on September 15 to a letter from Garrett, in which he states:

> **Leroy, my proposal is to come to Dallas on Monday, October 6, remaining five full days. I would be delighted to have any or all of the young preaching brethren present for the exploration of our viewpoints. I trust that we can devote a full share of that time to an intensive canvass of our convictions. I expect to learn a great deal from you, and will be indebted to you for all that you may bestow out of the vast field of your scholarship which will aid me to more fully serve the One "whom having not seen I love."[62]**

The proposed meeting in Dallas was postponed when, less than a month later, Leroy called Carl and invited him to come to Winfield, Alabama, for the purpose of engaging in what Carl

had proposed in his letter of September 15, 1952. In a subsequent report titled "Alabama Meeting," Carl wrote:

> **The editor spent four days in Winfield, Alabama, Oct. 6-9. The primary purpose of the visit was to discuss points of agreement and disagreement with various gospel proclaimers. Winfield was selected as the locale for the discussions because Bro. Leroy Garrett, of Dallas, Texas, was there engaged in a tent meeting. Other brethren who assisted were Carroll Wrinkle, Cleveland, Tenn.; Clifford Yeldell, Bastrop, Louisiana; Bernard Haygood, Greenville, Ala.; and Barry Throckmorton, Tuscumbia, Ala. (now a student in David Lipscomb College) . Bro. G. A. Dunn, Sr., of Dallas, Texas, sat in on the discussion for a brief period the first day.[63]**

Writing in 1979, nearly three decades later, Ketcherside gave a retrospective description of the Alabama meeting:

> **I went down to spend several days with him in the small hotel. There, in the presence of three David Lipscomb College students, we explored the points upon which we differed for three whole days. We began talking early in the morning and continued until late at night, merely taking time out to go to the tent for meeting. The people in the community did not know what was taking place as we sought to understand one another and the Word of God. Later we set up meetings in homes in Dallas, and then decided to widen the scope and invite all to participate. These were some of the most profitable and soul-searching experiences of my life.[64]**

The Early Influence of Leroy Garrett

From October 1952 through September 1958, Leroy Garrett published a monthly paper called *Bible Talk***. During that same period, Carl Ketcherside continued publishing his** *Mission Messenger***.**

The relationship between Garrett and Ketcherside spanned thirty-seven years, from 1952–1989. A comparison of their published writings, along with their personal correspondence throughout that period, would be a fruitful field of research, but such an analysis lies beyond the scope of this work. However, a review of their relationship from 1952–1957 is essential to understanding what we have called the transformative years of Ketcherside's life and work. It was during this period that he and Garrett met and became acquainted with each other's thinking.

In a tract published by the *Advocate* in 1953, G. C. Brewer said of Leroy Garrett:

> **The only unfavorable thing I know of him is that he has recently gone over to Carl Ketcherside's views, at least to the extent that he is a partner with Ketcherside now.[65]**

The "views" to which Brewer refers are those held by Ketcherside relative to his opposition to the pastor system and the existence of Bible colleges— views which Ketcherside had held for decades. In response to Brewer's assertion, Garret points out:

> **Anyone only needs to look into the back issues of *Apostolic Times* to see how I stood on these matters years before I ever met Ketcherside. Brother Goodpasture could inform Brewer that I also submitted at least one article on these issues to the *Advocate* while I was yet at Harvard and long before I ever met Ketcherside or even saw his paper.[66]**

Garrett goes on to note:

> **I have a letter in my files from Ketcherside dated June 19, 1952,[67] in which he relates how he wrote the editor of the *Apostolic Times* for my address, that he desired to meet me, and for me to see his paper. He also invited me to his debate with Wallace. He said, "This will**

tend to show how our thinking runs along the same line." Later on he related in his *Mission Messenger* that he had met me for a discussion in Alabama and that we were in perfect agreement on the college and pastor issues. So what does Brother Brewer mean by saying I have gone over to Ketcherside's views? . . . It might mean that we have all been influenced by the same New Testament.[68]

In December of 1954, Garrett wrote in *Bible Talk*:

> **A letter from Missouri indicates that some brethren are suspicious of some strange ideas being promulgated by one Carl Ketcherside. Some were heard to say, "He got those ideas from Leroy Garrett." But word from another section of the county admonishes me "Don't be influenced by Ketcherside." I had to laugh at such contradistinctive ideas. Ketcherside is running wild because of associations with Dallas and Garrett has gone berserk because of relationships with the sage of St. Louis! What next? Does it not occur to brethren that men might be influenced by the same desires and by the same book???[69]**

In his prefatory essay to the twelve-volume set of *The Works of W. Carl Ketcherside*, published by College Press in 1997, Leroy Garret wrote:

> **It was assumed that Carl and I were a conspiracy of two editors, deviously plotting our strategy against "the faithful." The truth was that we didn't know what was in each other's journal until it arrived in the mail, and there was never any "strategy talk" on what we might do as a team. We reached our conclusions independently, and we by no means agreed on everything.**

During the early 1950s, Garrett and Ketcherside focused their efforts primarily on restoring what they considered to be the ancient order of "mutual edification"— one form of mutual ministry— by the members of each local congregation, in contrast to the "pastor system." In December of 1953, Garrett served as timekeeper for Ketcherside during his second debate

with G. K. Wallace in St. Louis, where the pastor system was discussed. In 1954, the March issue of *Bible Talk* was expanded by several pages and devoted entirely to the issue of the one-man pastor system. Ten months later, following Garrett's lead, Ketcherside devoted the entire January 1955 issue to "Dealing with the introduction among churches of Christ of a clergy caste operating under the guise of 'located evangelists.'"

In June of 1954, Garrett observed:

> **For mutual ministry embraces virtually every phase of Christianity. A woman who sews for the poor is practicing mutual ministry; one who feeds the hungry, sweeps the meetinghouse, or sits up with the sick is practicing mutual ministry. . . . Mutual *edification* or *teaching* is only a part of mutual ministry. Yet it is as important as any other part and should be observed with the same care and the same extensiveness.[70]**

During this same decade, Ketcherside and Garrett were united in their opposition to the creation of any institution specifically for teaching the Bible— an issue they had both debated— as they regarded the church as the only institution authorized by God to impart knowledge of the scriptures.

They were also united in their opposition to the use of instrumental music in public worship. In 1958, they had an opportunity to meet and discuss the issue with two brothers from Christian Churches (Independent), an encounter that Ketcherside describes:

> **On Labor Day weekend in 1958 occurred a meeting of great significance. It was held in the little city of Nowata, Oklahoma, and was arranged by my brother Paul who presided over it. Hundreds of brethren gathered from several states. It was a rich time in sharing. Featured was a discussion of instrumental music in relation to fellowship. Participants were Seth Wilson, Don DeWelt, Leroy Garrett and myself. The format proved to be excellent.**

There were three sessions of two hours each.[71]

It is significant that Garrett and Ketcherside intentionally avoided orchestrating a defense of their position in that meeting (and, by implication, others like it). This is clearly seen in a letter from Ketcherside to Garrett dated August 9, 1958, in which he writes:

> **I am pleased to see your attitude toward our relationship relative to the Nowata meeting. I feel that we would do an injustice to our own plea if we were to meet and work out in collusion a scheme of attack on the topic under consideration. I want you to go as a free man in Christ Jesus. If you differ with me, I know that you will do it in love, and I shall try, if it becomes necessary to state points of difference to manifest the same attitude. Our purpose is not to attack the position of Don and Seth, men whom I have never met, but to listen to them as one would listen to any brother, and to weigh and evaluate what they say. We shall be judged before the final throne as individuals, and we should allow that fact to stifle any desire to coerce each other in any manner. I shall not present any of the things that I propose to discuss, and I shall await the trip to Nowata, to hear your proposals on the subject. Thus we shall be left free to seek for truth as the summum bonum of human experience. We are not entering a debate, we are going for a sincere study of a problem which affects us all.**[72]

In the margin of that letter, Garrett wrote: "The occasion that dates the beginning of the unity meetings including Xn [Christian] church. LG"

The conclusion that Ketcherside was significantly influenced in his thinking by Garrett is not one that can be supported by the writings of either. What does seem clear, however, is that at the time of they met, both writers possessed a similar hermeneutical approach to scripture and were already closely aligned in terms of their views of the issues of the day.

Additionally, both appear to have been genuinely committed to adhering to the ancient order of things, as set forth in scripture, and were diligent in their examination of the early Stone-Campbell literature. The similarity of their backgrounds lent itself to their use of each other as a sounding board when assessing new discoveries or revising views they had previously held.

The Beginning of Change

For six years following his spiritual encounter in Belfast in 1951, Ketcherside made a concerted effort to discover flaws in his thinking, submitting all of his previous views to a thorough and objective review. During that period, he read every available issue of the *Christian Baptist* **and** *Millennial Harbinger*, **in addition to the works of other early pioneers of the movement. The insights he gained from that research convinced him that the heirs of the unity effort, initiated by Thomas Campbell in his** *Declaration and Address*, **had lost sight of the principle on which the movement had been founded.**

Although Ketcherside later identified the January 1957 issue of the *Mission Messenger* **as a definitive turning point in his writing, the seeds of that change can be traced back to the pages of his journal, beginning in the early 1950s.**[73]

In the last six issues of *Mission Messenger* **for 1952, Ketcherside published a series of articles titled "For This We Plead." At the end of each article, he included the following disclaimer, or one similar:**

> **The series of articles, of which the above is the first, represent the convictions of the author, who is also editor of this paper. They may not necessarily represent the views in all particulars of other writers or contributors to the paper except as they embrace them.**

This disclaimer, the first of its kind he had ever published, marked a clear shift in his thinking. In retrospect, it seems somewhat prophetic, as this series— and others to follow— would eventually lead to the loss of some of his most staunch supporters and regular contributors to the journal. However, this was not the earliest indicator that his thinking was undergoing transformation.

The Name of the Church— **During his voyage from New York to Cobh, Ireland, Ketcherside was asked the name of the church to which he belonged. In his reply, he observed, that "The only name ever given it was 'the church.'"**[74]

Upon his return from Ireland, Ketcherside traveled immediately to New Castle, Indiana, where he was scheduled to speak at a four-day mass meeting. In his autobiography, he recalls:

> **On Tuesday night I addressed a packed auditorium on "The Name of the Church." I took the position that the body of Christ was given no title, and did not need a distinctive name since it had no rivals. To name it was to denominate it, and thus to separate the family of God. This was my first attempt to state convictions which were beginning to form.**[75]

Recovery of the Vocabulary of the Holy Spirit— **It was Ketcherside's contention that a recovery of the vocabulary of the Holy Spirit was essential to restoring the ancient order of things — a view that Alexander Campbell had also advocated. In this regard, Ketcherside wrote:**

> **We plead for the declaration of God's will in the language employed by the Holy Spirit, that is, the calling of Bible things by Bible names, thus making it possible for all to speak the same thing. . . . There is no other way by which one may guard a message against misinterpretation in transmission than by the employment of the original words in their original sense, in the publication of that**

message. . . .

> **We acknowledge that even a restoring of Biblical vocabulary would not instantaneously produce unity of all believers. This generation, out of the traditionalism of the past, would still attach to the words a significance not justified by the scriptures, but future generations shut off from an unscriptural vocabulary and with only the language of the Spirit to investigate, would soon come by research to a proper appreciation of God's revelation.**[76]

The following month, Ketcherside continued:

> **Much of the disunity among believers has occurred because of attempts to segregate the followers of the lowly Nazarene into factions designated by official names. The New Testament church has no official name. To give it an exclusive title is to sectarianize it to that extent. God has seen fit to label the composite group of believers by a descriptive noun, a common noun, the word "church."**[77]

His definitive treatment of this subject appears five years later in an essay titled, "The Name of the Bride."[78]

The Nature of Christian Fellowship— **Of the other views of Ketcherside that began to develop during this transformative period, none is of greater consequence for his life and work than those regarding the nature of Christian fellowship. While a more mature Ketcherside would develop views of fellowship based upon his understanding of the nature and work of the Holy Spirit, the earliest expression of his revised outlook was in terms of those who, in faith and repentance, had been immersed into Christ. In 1952, he wrote:**

> **Every individual who hears the testimony relating to King Jesus, who believes it, and is moved thereby to such remorse for his sinful life that he alters his course and surrenders completely to the will of the sovereign Lord, being immersed into His death, is begotten of God, and**

> born of "that Jerusalem which is from above, and is the mother of us all" (Gal. 4:26). Such an one is added to the church by our Lord (Acts 2:47). He is my brother, regardless of who is the agent in immersing him. He may affiliate himself with a sectarian group immediately, and in so doing will lend his influence to that which is contrary to the Father's will. He is then a brother in error, a captive of a foreign power. It is the duty of those who love Christ and hate division to call God's people out of Babylon (Rev. 18:4) and into unity of the Spirit (Eph. 4:3).[79]

The significance of the above statement would have been seen immediately to have implications for members of Baptist churches and members of independent Christian Churches, all of whom met the criteria for being recognized as brothers in Christ, albeit in error. Ten years later, however, Ketcherside would write:

> While we are separated, segregated, strife-torn, and self-willed, we are all "brothers in error" and those who say they are not make the biggest error of all!"[80]

At the time Ketcherside began to move away from his earlier views, it was the common belief among Churches of Christ that fellowship among Christians could only be extended to those whose interpretation of scripture was similar to their own— with regard to those doctrines by which Churches of Christ were generally identified.[81] Beyond these were those considered by the mainline churches to pertain to splinter groups— those who opposed Sunday schools, multiple cups, the existence and support of orphan homes and other para-church institutions, etc.

In every case, fellowship was regarded as a function of whether individuals were aligned with what was assumed (by the majority) to be God's understanding of those doctrines requisite to remaining faithful to the Lord.[82] To be one "as I and the father are one," was thought to refer to doctrinal thinking, the

orthodoxy of which was always determine by preachers and other leaders of the group. The one, true church of Christ was always identified as that church with which the identifier was associated— and it was assumed that the veracity of such an identification would be corroborated by God. After all, as it was commonly believed, we can all see the Bible alike if we are sincere and diligent in our study. That a brother could be regarded as being in fellowship with God while holding to doctrinal conclusions other than those (non-negotiable doctrines) of the group was thought to be an absurdity.

Consequently, when Garrett published an essay in 1956 titled "Are We the 'True Church' While All Others Are Sects?" it set off a tidal wave of controversy that continues to this day. In the essay, Garrett wrote:

> **. . . the Church of Christ (such as we know of it here in America) thinks it is the only true church. . . . and (we) leave the impression that no other religious group could be the Lord's body. If people took us seriously, they could ask such embarrassing questions as 'Which of your many factions in the Church of Christ is the true New Testament church?' . . . A baptized believer in Christ does not cease to be my brother because he believes in an organ or premillennialism. It is not a matter of his being in a false church and my being in the true church. If we are joint heirs with Christ by virtue of being raised together with him, then we are both in the one and only true church.[83]**

With this article, Garrett set the question of Christian fellowship on an entirely different plane from where it had been placed by Daniel Sommer in 1889. In his "Address and Declaration," Sommer called upon all who agreed with him on the pressing doctrinal issues of the day to cease regarding as brethren all who differed with him. Although Garrett was not saying anything other than what Campbell and the early Restoration fathers had said, the average man in the pew (along with most church leaders) had little acquaintance with those

writings.

In the following issue of *Bible Talk*, Garrett published another seminal article, "This Question of Fellowship." In the opening paragraphs, he states:

> **One basic fallacy in our thinking on fellowship is the supposition that if one disagrees with another on some minor or major point of doctrine that fellowship is not possible. Fellowship does not presuppose unity of conviction. . . . Once we can see that we may disagree, and even disagree radically, and yet maintain fellowship with each other, we will get far in rebuilding the ruins that have fallen around us on every side through a factious and divisive spirit.**
>
> **We may disagree with each other as to the order of worship, the method of serving the Supper, the plan to be used for teaching the Bible, the use of an organ or professional minister, premillennialism, institutionalism, and yet have the one thing in common that will make possible genuine fellowship— the relationship we sustain as joint heirs of the grace of Christ! . . . Our trouble has always been that we think the differences have to be worked out before fellowship is possible.[84]**

Garrett goes on to say:

> **If we are in Christ, then we are called into his fellowship (1 Cor. 1:9). That is why I contend that all God's children can be in fellowship, despite the differences that exist. It is *attitude* or *a lack of proper relation with Christ* that make fellowship impossible. If one is implacable and factious (even about truth), he makes fellowship difficult . . . .[85]**

The fallout from Garrett's two articles, which signaled a paradigmatic shift in his thinking,[86] was seen in a letter written by O. C. Dobbs of Birmingham, Alabama, to W. Carl Ketcherside, dated December 18, 1956. Garrett's articles were of

great concern to Dobbs, who had been an ardent supporter of both Garrett and Ketcherside in years prior. In his letter, he wrote:

> **"If we can ever meet again, I want you to take time out and explain brother Leroy's article to me. . . . I have learned the New Testament in the wrong way. I never have understood any part of it, especially, FELLOWSHIP, if Leroy is right. . . . I can't understand how we can fellowship digressive brethren and at the same time, affiliate with them."[87]**

In his response to Dobbs, Ketcherside wrote:

> **As to the controversial article by Brother Garrett, I feel sure that he was offering it as a basis of reasoning on the subject, and not as a dogmatic, or arbitrary law to bind upon the brethren. Such a course would controvert the very thing he was advocating. . . . Brother Garrett is exploring a field which has been "off limits" for a good many years. He has brought it back into the "eminent domain." . . . I am personally doing a considerable amount of research on the twin subjects of fellowship and heresy. I am not ready yet to write, for I do not wish to be impulsive in my presentation. My findings and conclusions may differ materially from those of Leroy. As to that I am unable to say as yet! But whatever I say will be for the purpose of gathering the scattered sheep from the hills of sectism, and not to drive them farther from the high mountain of grace.[88]**

From Ketcherside's comments, it is evident that Garrett was the first to arrive at a conclusion for which Ketcherside would later be best known— his views on "unity in diversity." But it would be two years before Ketcherside would express a view of fellowship similar to Garrett's.

Although a sequential, comparative analysis of the thought of Garrett and Ketcherside would be of considerable interest, it

lies beyond the purpose of this introduction.

Revised Views on Debates

Reflecting on his career as a debater, launched in 1937 by his confrontation with Rue Porter, Ketcherside wrote:

> **I became a recognized champion, a debater and defender of our factional interpretations, deductions and opinions. I would not have you think this was against my will. I liked it. Gladiatorial combat was "right down my alley." I firmly believed that our group was the kingdom of heaven upon earth to the exclusion of all others.[89]**

Over the years, however, he came to recognize the toxic nature of forensic combat and rejected it as a feasible means of aiding the cause of doctrinal agreement among disciples of Christ.

> **"I have appeared upon the forensic stage and engaged in verbal combat with many of the warhorses of contention, pawing, snorting and breathing fire. But I have renounced debate with my brethren as wholly irrelevant and ineffective in our time, to accomplish that great and majestic purpose for which Jesus died."[90]**

In retrospect he wrote:

> **I resolved that I would never again debate publicly with any brother. I would never again represent any party, sect or schism. I would never again allow myself to be selected and thrust forward by the partisans of any school of thought to defend their opinions and deductions. I would stand or fall to my own master and I would allow all others to do the same. It came as a great relief to realize that never again would I have to spend weeks trying to figure out what an opponent might say and how I would parry his thrust. Since the moment I made my promise to**

> the Father that I would never again debate, I have become increasingly convinced of the folly of attempting to arrive at truth or alleviate division by such a ridiculous procedure. If a community is not divided before a debate it will always be after one is held. The very psychology of our modern debating is divisive.[91]

Although disavowing public debate as an effective means of finding common ground with opponents,[92] Ketcherside encouraged the concept of an open forum, in which each party had the opportunity to speak and then be queried by those present. He participated in numerous forums of this type throughout his later ministry. One such recurring event was the Hartford Forum (later, the Saint Louis Forum), which Ketcherside regarded as "one of the greatest influences in creating respect across party lines."[93]

The Definitive Years (1957–83)

Having examined the early part of the life of Carl Ketcherside— his years as an admittedly sectarian leader, as well as those of transformation in his outlook— we come now to the latter years for which he is best known and during which he became an advocate of peace and unity among believers. His message, however, was no less controversial in the end than it was in the beginning.

Crossing the Rubicon

Like Saul of Tarsus, after his encounter with Jesus on the Damascus highway, Ketcherside was never the same after his Belfast experience. From 1953 to 1957, a significant transformation took place in his life out of which came his series of articles titled "That They All May Be One." The series was begun in January of 1956 and ran through September of the

following year.

One of the earliest indications of Ketcherside's rapidly changing views on Christian fellowship is seen in his essay, "Law and Love," published in January 1957:

> **Those who spend their lives in seeking to bind upon their fellows the hair-splitting technicalities woven out of the gossamer thread of imagination and speculation miss the majesty of the design of heaven as far as those who disregard it entirely and invent new approaches to fellowship which heaven never authorized. The first defeats the purpose of fellowship by rigid fences which would debar many whom God accepts; the second by removing all barriers to include those whom God rejects.[94]**

The following month, in "Grilling the Editor," he echoed what he had written to O. C. Dobbs just two months earlier:

> **We need to study diligently such words as fellowship and heresy. I am doing extensive research on these last two now, and hope to publish something regarding them soon.[95]**

In the same issue of the paper, Ketcherside explored an imagined scenario in which an evangelist, who has started a new congregation, is asked by a prospective member about his deficiency in doctrinal understanding. Quoting Romans 14:1, the "evangelist" begins his response.

> **The evangelist quoted, "Receive the man who is weak in the faith, but not to make decisions on his inward questionings." He said that while this did not specifically apply to the type of problem now confronting them, it at least laid down the principle of receiving those into the fellowship who still entertained honest doubts. He pointed out that we are not all equals in learning, knowledge, and experience. All of us are affected by our environments, early training, and previous investigations. We should not think of ourselves as climbing the mountains of faith in**

clumps. Each of us is striving along the road as best he can, and all are strung out along the way. So long as all are looking unto Jesus, and have hearts filled with love for him and for each other, we should be charitable and patient toward those who have not advanced as far as others.[96]

Further development in Ketcherside's thinking on fellowship may be seen in his 1957 article, "Class Controversy:"

> **The disciple brotherhood has been rent and torn by strife until it presents a spectacle of disgrace to every candid observer. The movement started to unite the shattered forces of Christendom has degenerated into a melee of factionism and civil war. Prejudiced partisans, under the guise of "preaching the gospel" assail the ears of their auditors with creedal statements, and sow discord on the basis of arbitrary interpretations and uninspired opinions, actually holding up some factional view as the key to heaven, while excommunicating and disfellowshipping every person who cannot repeat the party shibboleth, or whose enlightened heart will not allow him to be made a servile slave to a paper hierarchy.**[97]

In August, he quotes Alexander Campbell:

> **No party will receive into its fellowship all whom God will accept into heaven, God thinks more of his children than he does of man's creeds, and the Bible was made for man, not man for the Bible.**[98]

And in September, he announces: "Starting in January we will deal with the question of 'Fellowship' and 'Heresy' for a number of months."[99]

Finally, in January 1958, Ketcherside published the first in a series of thirteen installments titled "Thoughts on Fellowship." With reference to these articles, he later observed:

> **They represented my crossing of the Rubicon, the burning of my bridges behind me. They were the first guns**

fired in my commitment to an unrelenting war against sectarianism, and especially against my own.[100]

Regarding the period from 1959 to 1960, Ketcherside wrote:

> **I began to understand the grace of God. I began to see that love was the fulfillment of law. And I began to walk in the Spirit.[101]**

The New Venture Continues

Three years into his new venture in faith, Ketcherside wrote an essay titled "A Spiritual Adventure," in which he initiated a new series of studies in search of truth— "the noblest pursuit to which rational beings may consecrate their lives." At the outset, he invites his readers to "point out salient features which we overlook as a result of shortcomings." This study, he adds, is based on the presupposition that "there are still truths which we have not discovered." Consequently, he urges that each should abandon the partisan spirit, "as it will warp our vision and cause us to view things in a false light" because "truth is not a party possession."

On page 2 of the essay, he observes that,

> **It is not God's thinking that has produced our present predicament. . . . It is our own reasoning that is responsible. If we change our status we must think as God thinks. This demands a re-study of His revelation. Such an investigation must be made with unveiled face. We must not bend God's word to suit our theories, but abandon our ideas to accept His word. In the research which we now commence we will cut across the thinking of many of our readers. Some of what we say will be diametrically opposed to what you have previously thought.[102]**

The investigation to which he refers had its starting point

in the Berlin Street meetinghouse in Belfast, Ireland, in 1951. However, it became unmistakably clear that the pace of the venture had reached critical momentum with the publication of his October 1958 essay, "Thoughts on Fellowship," in which he emphatically writes:

> *We have no right to make anything a test of fellowship which God has not made a condition of salvation.*[103]

That statement echoed the sentiment of Leroy Garrett's ground-breaking essay in *Bible Talk*, "This Question of Fellowship," published two years prior.

Although Ketcherside was far from monolithic in the focus of his writings, everything he wrote from 1957 onward was related to the nature of spiritual fellowship, which he saw as grounded in God's purpose to be all things in all people. How we relate to God, for Ketcherside, determines how we relate to all others who are related to Him. Consequently, the repetition of significant propositions throughout his essays on various topics points to their underlying relationship to truth. "All truth is one truth, whether arrived at by revelation, experimentation or rationalization," he would say. "No one ever teaches any truth without teaching God's truth!"[104]

Mission Messenger

Within less than a decade of its first issue, *Missouri Mission Messenger* evolved from a state-wide newsletter to a journal of international circulation, with substantive articles of a didactic nature. News reports had been relegated to a single page of the journal and the identifier "Missouri" had been dropped from its name. When, in January of 1955, a new masthead was added, *Mission Messenger* had reached the appearance and format it was to retain for the remaining twenty years of publication.

In 1957, the content of *Mission Messenger* began to reflect the decisive change in Ketcherside's thinking, particularly his series of articles on fellowship. It was at that point, he later observed, that the paper began to be read more widely.

Although the final volume of the paper bore volume number 37, it was published only for 36 years (1940–1975). In April 1948, the volume number was inadvertently changed from 9 to 10, and the error was perpetuated throughout the remainder of its publication.

Recalling the history of *Mission Messenger*, Ketcherside observed:

> **At the time of its inception we had no idea that the paper would ever be sent to more than 8,000 readers, upon every continent of the globe, each month. It was only after I became convinced that what we termed "the Church of Christ" was not identical with the one body for which Jesus died, but had been fashioned into a party growing out of a historical attempt to restore the primitive order, the paper really began to be read more widely.[105]**

The Content of His Later Writings

In 1967, Ketcherside summed up his approach to the recovery of the restoration principle as "renewal through recovery of the apostolic proclamation, purpose and power,"[106] a slogan that found its way into the title of the 1979 doctoral dissertation of Stanley McDaniel at Indiana University.[107] By "apostolic proclamation" Ketcherside had reference to the message of the gospel, obedience to which unites the believer with the Father and the Son— in the way they are one— and with each other. By "apostolic purpose," he referred to the will of God that all things be united in Christ. By "apostolic power," he meant the power of the Holy Spirit— the divine love of God, poured out into the heart of the believer by the Spirit of him who

is love.

Although Ketcherside presented his revised outlook as a "new approach to restoration," he later acknowledged that it was nothing more than Thomas Campbell's *Declaration and Address* presented in the light of contemporary needs. Perhaps "renewal through recovery of the apostolic proclamation, purpose, and power" best summarizes the organizing principle of Ketcherside's mission and message, at least in the latter years of his ministry.

While the content of Ketcherside's writings could well serve a divided Christendom in general, they were addressed specifically to the heirs of what has come to be known as *The Stone-Campbell Movement*— a designation that became popular shortly after the publication of Leroy Garrett's history by that title, but after Ketcherside's lifetime. A casual review of the "Messenger Service,"[108] a column of *Mission Messenger*, will reveal the wide spectrum of audiences to which he spoke. In that section of the paper appeared regular announcements of events and publications in which neither he nor his writings would have been welcomed.

Although he was well-read and conversant in Christian theology, Ketcherside had a dislike for the specialized vocabulary set of the theologian and avoided its use unless he was communicating directly with native speakers of that dialect.[109] His concern was that his message be understood by all — not limited to a privileged elite. His message was always designed for the common man, the non-theologian, but not for the undisciplined or casual reader.

Throughout his lifetime, Ketcherside was opposed to the use of instrumental music in corporate praise of God. Nevertheless, he moved freely among those congregations of saints where the instrument was used, embracing them as his brothers and sisters in Christ. While in his post-1957 writings he

frequently made known his convictions in this regard, he made no appreciable effort to persuade others to agree with his conclusions. Yet he was intensely opposed to allowing the instrument— either its acceptance or its rejection— to separate brethren. It was his position that nothing more is required for fellowship than is required for sonship, thus eliminating the question of instrumental music as a "condition for fellowship."

As for whether there are Christians in the (other) denominations, Ketcherside would say, "Wherever God has a child, I have a sister or a brother." While he maintained throughout his lifetime that the proper response to the gospel invitation was faith, repentance, and baptism, he also maintained that God is sovereign and not bound by our perceptions of what he meant by what he said in scripture. It is clear from his writings, however, that Ketcherside, like Campbell, was quite certain there were Christians outside the Restoration Movement. He also insisted that one could be a member of a sect without being sectarian since sectarianism is not a matter of organizational membership but of one's attitude toward others of God's children.

While Ketcherside's primary concern was to have all believers come to recognize the spiritual unity that exists between all genuine disciples of Jesus, he also wished to have them understand the constitutional and intentional nature of that essential unity. With such an understanding, he believed, the obstacle to unity would be removed, and believers would no longer consider doctrinal agreement (on perceived "non-negotiable" interpretations) to be requisite to unity.

Finally, it should be noted that Carl Ketcherside had a deep concern for the recovery and preservation of the language of revelation. Although he held no mechanical view of inspiration, he was quite convinced that the state of disunion existing within the Stone-Campbell Movement was due largely to a misunderstanding— attributable to misuse, naïve and

otherwise— of the terms selected by the inspired writers of the new covenant scriptures to set forth propositional truths. Of special concern to him were the terms, *gospel*, *doctrine*, *worship*, *minister*, *church*, *secular*, *fellowship*, *love*, and *unity*. It was the examination of the apostolic use of such terms that filled most of the pages of his journal. His 1974 bound volume of *Mission Messenger* was entitled *Pure Speech*. Each lead article of the paper for that year dealt with various words of the Spirit which had been assigned connotations foreign to their original meaning. It was his conviction that a recovery of the apostolic use of these terms would resolve a great deal of the muddled thinking upon which the divisive hermeneutic of latter-day Stone-Campbell restorationists squarely rested.

His Detractors

Since his earliest days of ministry, Ketcherside publicly espoused positions which were opposed by leaders in mainline Churches of Christ. While the positions he promoted during his later years were not those of the early Ketcherside, they too were opposed by leaders of those same churches.

Of the attacks on Ketcherside's post-1956 thinking, none was more persistently orchestrated than that which came from the pages of the *Firm Foundation*, a weekly paper published by members of Churches of Christ. Over a period of 20 months— from April 3, 1962, through December 3, 1963— there appeared 20 articles in which the positions of Ketcherside were attacked by its editor, Reuel Lemmons (10 articles), and staff writers Glenn Wallace (2) and Roy H. Lanier, Sr. (8).[110]

In none of those critiques of Ketcherside's writings was his position ever stated correctly. Consequently, none of the arguments used to show falsity in his thinking was relevant to his position. As Ketcherside once wrote:

> **The true test of a man's integrity is the attitude he takes toward those with whom he differs. Few indeed can be trusted to state the real position of an opponent correctly. So eager are men to justify themselves in the eyes of others that they will often stoop to unfairness and seek to rise by misrepresentation and false accusation. If such a course does not prove the weakness of a cause, it certainly proves the moral weakness of the individuals who follow it."[111]**

Although Ketcherside republished nine of Lemmons' articles in *Mission Messenger*, along with his replies (which always followed the articles to which he was replying), Lemmons initially refused to publish Ketcherside's replies to his opponents. Although he eventually relented, it was 15 months after the attacks began— after 17 articles had been published misrepresenting him. Even then, Ketcherside was allowed only four replies (one in August 1963 and three the following month), all of which appeared in the paper on pages following the editor's reply— before readers had an opportunity to examine Ketcherside's arguments.

A review and analysis of the arguments contained in those articles will reveal that all of them, without exception, relate in varying degrees to Ketcherside's views regarding (1) the difference between "gospel" and "doctrine," (2) the nature of spiritual fellowship, and (3) the essential and constitutional nature of the church.

In 1974, a joint conference was held by missionaries to Brazil from Churches of Christ and Independent Christian Churches. The conference had become a recurring event to which each of the two groups selected a speaker for the occasion. This year the Christian Church missionaries decided to invite Carl Ketcherside, whereas those from the other stream of the Stone-Campbell movement invited Reuel Lemmons. The conference met at a campsite which had been rented from the Presbyterians. It turned out that Lemmons and Ketcherside

were assigned to share a room for their stay.[112] Of their time together, Ketcherside wrote:

> I learned a great deal about my companion while we were together. I am not sure he was as comfortable with the brethren from the Christian Churches as I was. But he was formally polite to all and gave no offense. He was brought there to do a job, and he did it, and that was it. I found him to be a mellifluous orator of the old school. Some of his presentations rivaled the best of William Jennings Bryan, "the golden voice of the Platte." This was especially true of the early morning devotionals in which we took turns speaking on one of the psalms. Since our visit I have had a longing to talk at length with Brother Lemmons about the community of saints in which we both share. There is no justifiable reason for us being apart. Certainly there is none for us appearing as enemies.[113]

Years later, after resigning his position as editor of the *Firm Foundation*, Lemmons experienced a transformation of his own thinking, moving somewhat closer to positions held by the later Ketcherside.

Published Works

The published works of Carl Ketcherside may be chronologically divided into two periods— 1957 marking the beginning of the second period of his writings. The corpus of his works consists of thirty-six volumes of his monthly paper, *(Missouri) Mission Messenger* (which, during its final year, had a paid subscription of over 8,500, with readers on every continent of the globe), numerous tracts and pamphlets, and some eleven books written after 1956. From 1940–1956, Ketcherside authored or co-authored over twenty books. Although there appears to be no complete list of his pre-1957 works, a list of known titles from that period has been included in the appendix to this work.

As a survey of his works will show, Ketcherside wrote on an extensive array of topics. Yet his primary focus was always on the restoration of visible unity among the members of the movement to which he was an heir. In keeping with that focus, he wrote most often about the subjects of *grace*, *fellowship*, *unity*, **and the** *Holy Spirit*, **all of which he would relate under the rubric of** *divine love*.

In support of these primary topics, he wrote extensively about the nature and work of the Holy Spirit (*Heaven Help Us***), the law and covenants of God (***The Death of the Custodian***), the priesthood of all believers (***The Royal Priesthood***), the misuse of Scripture in support of legalism and division— due to a failure to restore the vocabulary of the Holy Spirit (***The Twisted Scriptures***)— and the reasonableness of faith (***Simple Trusting Faith***). In addition, his writings on hermeneutics dealt primarily with the authority of scripture and the misguided hermeneutic of patternism (***According to the Pattern***) See the Appendix for an annotated list of all his post-1956 books.**

His articles in *Mission Messenger* **were often aimed at exposing the source and evils of legalism, factionalism, sectarianism and, to some degree, secularism. But he also wrote on a variety of topics less controversial in his day (and consequently, perhaps, of less interest to his opponents), such as the discipline of the mind, (1958, 20:10, 11), the exploration of outer space (1967, 29:8, p. 122), the state of the unevangelized (1967, 29:10, p. 149), repentance, (1967, 29:11, p. 163), the gospel and holism (1967, 29:6, p. 81), faith and reason (1968, 30:2, p. 27), incarnational ministry (1968, 30:4, p. 50), inward transformation (1968, 30:7, p. 108), morality (1968, 30:11, p. 171), moral philosophy (1968, 30:8, p. 120), the cosmic struggle (1966, 28:1, p. 1), the existence of God (1966, 28:1, p. 9), modern man and belief (1966, 28:2, p. 24), and divine revelation (1966, 28:3, p. 33), to give but a sampling of articles from the 1960s.**

Ketcherside's essays often reflected the culture of the era in

which he was writing. This may be observed especially in the 1960s and 70s, when he incorporated into his writings the jargon of the hippie and college culture. But his grammar was always impeccable, and his manner of expressing himself was always clear and precise. In general, his essays were apologetical, expository, or hortatory in nature.

As one reads the nineteen volumes of *Mission Messenger*, from 1957 to 1975, the evidence of Ketcherside's progressive development, both as a thinker and a writer, is apparent. In 1957, a reformed Ketcherside spoke of love and unity among brethren but with the tone and style of the former right-wing debater. By 1975, the love of which he had been writing for 19 years had left its unmistakable mark on the tone and scope of his essays.[114]

In addition to his writings, Ketcherside solicited and responded to invitations to share his message across the continental U.S., appearing on numerous college campuses and in conventions in Puerto Rico, Brazil, and Mexico. In 1983, he participated in the International Convention of Itinerant Evangelists held in Amsterdam, Holland.[115] In all of these engagements, as well as in his writings, Ketcherside's guiding purpose was, in his own words, to promote "the recognition, receiving and welcoming of all of God's children as my brothers, regardless of the enclosures in which they are sheltered."[116]

The Final Years (1984–1989)

Ketcherside ceased publication of *Mission Messenger* with the December issue for 1975, a date he had set three years earlier.[117] With no more monthly deadlines to face, in nearly 40 years as an editor, Ketcherside was finally free to turn to other writing projects for which he formerly had little time. At that time, Leroy Garrett invited him to write his autobiography in installments to be published in *Restoration Review*. The series

was subsequently published by College Press, in 1991, under the title *Pilgrimage of Joy*. Chapter titles were supplied by the publisher, while subheadings were provided by Leroy Garrett.[118]

Ministry at Cornerstone

In 1983, the congregation of saints which met at Oak Hill Chapel decided to open an inner-city mission in St. Louis in a part of the city where there was a concentration of drug addicts, alcoholics, prostitutes, and runaways. Using a renovated building, at 3258 Ohio Ave., dubbed the "Cornerstone," they began to reach out to those who daily faced the challenges of physical and spiritual deprivation. Ketcherside came to regard his work at Cornerstone as the most effective work of his life—in which the love of God, of which he so often spoke, was unmistakably demonstrated. In one of his reports on his work at the inner-city mission, he wrote:

> **Nell and I (well, myself at least) are having a "ball" at the Cornerstone. I'm getting ready to teach a Bible Study on Monday mornings. We were there yesterday and helped some of the most sorrowful looking people I have ever seen. Worst are the abused wives. I had experience in a drunken husband stabbing his wife and the children were back home the next day. It goes on continuously! We gave away more Bibles last week than at any time since we turned the place from selling spirits to giving away the Spirit. The river of life is flowing as He said that it would.[119]**

The Passing of Nell Ketcherside

In the "Reader's Exchange" section of *Restoration Review* for October 1988, the following announcement appeared:

> **Nell left us very suddenly. She died almost immediately of a massive heart attack. I opened the bathroom door, not having heard a sound from her. She was lying doubled up with her head between the stool and the tub. I tried to get her to say something but she was gone. She detested formality so much that at her large funeral service at two places, here and at Flat River, I spoke briefly, . . . I asked for those who wanted to pay tribute to her to raise their hands and speak, and we followed with a few words from a brother. I went back to work teaching the next morning. It was hard. God bless you. —***Carl Ketcherside, 4420 Jamieson, 1C, St. Louis, Mo. 63109.***

Following the death of his wife, Nell, in August of 1988, Ketcherside struggled with acute loneliness. In a letter to Leroy Garrett, postmarked the day he died (probably the last letter he ever wrote), Ketcherside confided in his close friend the devastating impact he had experienced from Nell's passing:

> **I am disappointed in myself. I thought that I had the power to overcome grief or anything else which was my lot. I found that I simply do not have.[120]**

In that same letter, he told Leroy of his plans to marry Fran Woodside, a widow in his home church, a former Roman Catholic whom he had baptized into Christ.[121] She had been a friend to both Carl and Nell for several years. But it was not to be.

On May 24, 1989, Ketcherside completed a day of work at the Cornerstone and returned to apartment 1C, 4420 Jamieson Avenue. Sometime during that evening, he departed this life to be with the Lord. He was alone when he died. His body was found at 9:30 the following morning. The coroner said he had been dead for several hours, leaving undetermined the exact date of his death. Appropriately, it was Garrett who was called

upon to give the eulogy at Ketcherside's funeral, the text of which has been appended to this work. Both Carl and Nell Ketcherside were buried in Parkview Cemetery, located in St. Francois County, Missouri, between the towns of Park Hills and Farmington, about eighty miles south of St. Louis. Photos of their grave markers may be viewed in the appendix to this volume.

The Impact of His Ministry

The most salient of Ketcherside's gifts to the heirs of the Stone-Campbell restoration movement was the unusual clarity with which he understood and explained the presuppositions underlying the divisive hermeneutic which had come to characterize the movement since the early part of the 19th century. It was in the context of a religious milieu which had been blinded by the pride of legalism that he was given the uncommon insight with which to reverse engineer the code, so to speak, by which an indigenous unity movement had become the most divided religious group in American history. In response to a letter in which the correspondents took issue with Ketcherside's views on fellowship, he wrote:

> **I have never met the brethren who wrote this letter, but I have corresponded with them individually. They are good men. They want to obey the Lord. I have no problem projecting myself to the place where I can walk in their shoes for I once wrote to others just such letters as they have written unto me. I can have sympathy for them because I know exactly the process which brought them to their present state. But my compassion does not blind me to the fact that their interpretations and attitudes are destructive of the unity for which my Lord prayed, and will continue to divide the saints as long as they hold them."[122]**

Representative of the large volume of personal

correspondence that crossed his desk (from 6 to 7 letters per day, to which he always responded) are the comments from one of his readers in Arkansas:

> **"I want you to know that your journal has done more to straighten out my thinking than anything else I have ever read. It is astounding how your use of words makes the message come through until even those of us who were prejudiced against you can see that you are right"[123]**

In 2011, Abilene Christian University invited Leroy Garrett, Jerry Ketcherside, and Sue Burton to present three recorded speeches by Ketcherside which had been misplaced for at least two decades. The room was filled to capacity, with attendees standing in the hall. Following each presentation, the three speakers responded to questions from the audience.

In the late 1990s, the website, unity-in-diversity.org, was created for the purpose of providing free access to the writings of Carl Ketcherside throughout the world. The site contained all editions of *Mission Messenger* from 1957 through 1975, as well as many issues of the paper published from 1940 through 1956. Electronic editions of most of his books were also made available. At the time of this writing, a copy of those materials was being moved to archive.org for longer-term availability. They have also been shared with the library at Abilene Christian University. Most of Ketcherside's post-1956 books have been re-published in e-book format.

Chapter 2

THE VOCABULARY OF THE SPIRIT

Main Menu

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Introduction

> *There is nothing more essential to the union of the disciples of Christ than purity of speech*.— **Alexander Campbell.**[1]

> *We must restore the vocabulary of the Holy Spirit or wallow in a welter of semantic involvements, while men go to hell and the world burns down around our persons*.— **Carl Ketcherside**[2]

When Carl Ketcherside began to propose a return to the plan for unity, as set forth by Thomas Campbell in his *Declaration and Address*, he immediately became aware of new connotations that had accrued over a century and a half since the publication of Campbell's document. However, the accretions to the vocabulary of mid-twentieth-century heirs of the Stone-Campbell tradition consisted of new meanings assigned to words of inspiration. This new vocabulary set, he discovered, had come to serve as the underpinning of "scriptural" support for sectarian goals and objectives.

Historical Development

At the time Alexander Campbell began his effort to unite all believers in all sects, following the principle set forth in his father's *Declaration and Address*, he found an insurmountable obstacle: his ability to communicate with his audience was hopelessly impaired by the mass of nonbiblical, theological jargon that had accumulated among both Catholics and Protestants over the centuries.

In his fourth letter to William Jones of London, Campbell lamented that the conversion of the world had been prevented by the religious philosophers on the Bible who "have excogitated . . . doctrines and philosophical distinctions" that God has not proposed to us in his word. Citing these, as well as scriptural

phrases which had been misapplied, Campbell concludes: ". . . for the corruption of Christianity has been consummated by the incursions of barbarian language, and by the new appropriations of the sacred style."[3]

To such incursions into the "vocabulary of Heaven," Campbell affirms:

> *We choose to speak of Bible things in Bible words*, **because we are always suspicious that if the word is not in the Bible, the idea which it represents is not there; and always confident that the things taught by God are better taught in the words, and under the names, which the Holy Spirit has chosen and appropriated, than in the words which man's wisdom teaches.[4]**

Campbell concludes: "There is nothing more essential to the union of the disciples of Christ than purity of speech."[5]

Two decades later, but before the death of Alexander Campbell, Robert Richardson— Campbell's biographer— also addressed the difficulty of communicating the message of scripture to a modern audience, owing to new connotations assigned to the vocabulary of scripture:

> **There is, again, another matter which renders the difficulty, just mentioned, still greater, viz: that as a necessary consequence of a departure from scriptural ideas, our religious vocabulary has become greatly changed from that of apostolic times, and it is scarcely possible to use the latter any longer so as to be understood. New terms have been introduced in countless numbers, and Scripture words and phrases have received senses and applications wholly novel and foreign to those which they possess in the Book of God; or these have been so curtailed or so expanded that the real value of the expression can no longer be determined. The sterling coin of truth, stamped with a Divine impress, has been mutilated by the file of the**

sectary, or debased by the alloy of the theorist, so that it is no longer current even with those, who, though they may still recognize a portion of the image and superscription which it bears, can never, by its reception, sanction such corruption of the currency of Heaven.[6]

Communication and Human Discourse

For meaningful discourse to occur, the words employed must represent similar ideas in the minds of both participants. The extent of this similarity will determine how successfully they communicate. For the same reason, two people cannot have a similar understanding of what God meant by what he said if the words of the biblical text convey different meanings to each.

Concerning the communication of thought, Ketcherside wrote:

> **A word is a symbol of an idea or thought. It employs a certain combination of sounds or of written characters which are intended, when heard or seen, to convey to the mind, of the one whose senses are thus exercised, the idea which is in the mind of the speaker or writer. Communication of thought is always a difficult process. To transmit an exact image from one mind to another is not easy. Words come to mean different things to different persons. All of us are creatures of environment and training and our use of language is affected by these factors.**
>
> **The problem of our understanding is even greater when the message was delivered twenty centuries ago and in a tongue alien to our own. For one thing it is not always easy to find an exact equivalent to a word in another language. We must also realize that words are not static. They alter in meaning with the passage of time. Words are like the persons who use them— they possess both a body and soul. The body of a word is its form as seen or heard. It is composed of sounds or characters as the fleshly body**

is of muscle and tissue. The soul of a word like the soul of a man is invisible. It is the mental image that is formed when the word is used. The image grows or recedes as the meaning attached to a word expands or contracts through the march of time.

If we would understand the revelation of God we must not only know the words used by the Holy Spirit but we must also know the significance attached to each one of them. One might be able to repeat every word of the sacred oracles and not understand the message of God at all. It is not enough to know what an English word means now when it is used to translate what was written in Greek by the apostles. A twentieth century dictionary is not an adequate guide to the meaning of the Holy Spirit. We are indeed fortunate that men have devoted their lives to translating the sacred scriptures. "Other men have labored and ye have entered into their labors." But we still have the personal responsibility of determining what idea God intended to convey by the words selected. Translation is one thing and interpretation a wholly different thing.

The importance of this cannot be too greatly stressed. If we do not know what God meant by what He said we will not have the thoughts of God at all. In such an event the scriptures are not a revelation but an orderly arrangement of words and phrases. The fact is that the sacred volume becomes a revelation to each of us only as we understand what God is saying. Without this we have the form of words but the soul has fled. The Book will then be to us a dead letter for "the body without the spirit is dead."[7]

Ketcherside contended that the meaning of numerous key words employed by the Holy Spirit in the new covenant scriptures had been lost. He believed that once the heirs of the movement began to speak the same language— conveying the Spirit's intended meaning through the Spirit's words— Campbell's plan would offer a practical way forward.

To restore the ancient order of things, Ketcherside would say, we must speak not only *where* the Bible speaks but also speak only *as* the Bible speaks. This principle is seen nowhere more clearly than in his definitive work on the subject, *The Twisted Scriptures* (1977). In a foreword to the 2009 Kindle edition, Leroy Garrett observes:

> **The material in this book, originally written in 1965, anticipated this concern by more than two decades in that it recognizes that many of our problems, including a fractured Restoration Movement, are related to the way we have interpreted (or misinterpreted) the Bible, particularly the New Testament. . . . It is evident that the author would not insist upon a new hermeneutics, but would settle for the "Rules of Interpretation" laid down by Alexander Campbell, which do not allow the Bible to be warped and twisted for the sake of either party politics or party doctrines.[8]**

Without pretending to have perfect knowledge or understanding of scripture, Ketcherside believed that a rediscovery of the original meaning of certain words used by the Spirit would reveal how their connotation had been altered to fit a sectarian agenda.

> **One of the fruits of the party spirit is the development of a special vocabulary consisting of what may be called "loaded terms." Generally the words employed are found in the sacred scriptures but they are given a significance never intended by the Holy Spirit. Frequently, these expressions are used to prejudice the partisan followers against dissenters and non-conformists and make sure that "the loyal members" will not give them a hearing. Such words become a part of the mechanism to keep the members "in line" and discourage any attempt upon their part at original thinking.[9]**

Restoring the Vocabulary of the Spirit

Of the many words and phrases to which Ketcherside drew attention as having been assigned new meanings since the days of the Restoration fathers, the following are not addressed elsewhere in this work.

Apostasy

In his examination of the word "apostasy," Ketcherside notes that it is a transliteration of the Greek word *apostasia***.**

> **The term originally had a political overtone and appears in the papyri as a designation of those who rebel against the government or plot its overthrow. It carries with it the idea of defection from the existing order based upon revolt against it.[10]**

In current usage, one is charged with *apostasy* **when unable to subscribe to a partisan test of fellowship. However, since each party has its own criteria for loyalty, a person regarded as an** *apostate* **by one group may be regarded as "faithful and sound" by another.**

> **The word "apostate" is a reproachful epithet used as a brand or stigma for every person who does not wholly agree with "the powers that be." Every man who thinks for himself is guilty of apostasy in the current party vocabulary.[11]**

Consequently, those who insist that the fruit of the vine in the Lord's Supper must be passed to the congregation in one cup regard as *apostate* **those who use multiple cups for that purpose. In other words, as Ketcherside might phrase it, those who have what we** *reject* **are** *apostates***, while those who reject what we have are simply** *ignorant* **of the meaning of scripture.**

Faith

Those who misuse the word *apostasy* do the same with the word *faith*. To apostatize is to fall away from the faith— a deliberate rebellion against the authority of Jesus.

> **Unfortunately, such expressions as "the faith" are also loaded terms in these days. "The faith" not infrequently means the traditional interpretations placed upon the new covenant scriptures. "The faith" is that unwritten body of opinions in each party bound as a law upon the members and constituting the test of "loyalty." Since each party has an "infallible interpretation," the slightest deviation from this creed is looked upon as rebellion against Jesus and the one who can no longer condone the narrow and intolerant spirit is assailed by his accusers with "The Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from *the faith*.[12]**

In the ultimate sense, Ketcherside would conclude:

> **"The ultimate faith is a person. And the ultimate truth is a person. . . . Absolute truth and absolute faith are found in a person. I know who he is. And because I know I have eternal life, the life of God. And I have it now! . . . Absolute faith and absolute truth are identified with the living Word. The living Word is not something said by God but the one who says it. And that which is said or written, although it is the word of God and the word from God, can never equal or exhaust the living Word. . . . The living Word is divine."[13]**

False Teacher

It is the party spirit that breeds exclusiveness and intolerance— symptoms of sectarianism. Every faction must develop a type of legalism by which the worthiness of men is measured. True to the party spirit, it places an interpretation upon the word of God, then refers to that interpretation *as the word of God*. In this fashion, the sectarian spirit recognizes no

room for an honest difference of opinion regarding those non-negotiable interpretations of the party. To that end, the term "false teacher" is applied to every conscientious dissenter from the party programs.

Among those who believe in one container for the fruit of the vine, every sincere person who expresses a contradictory view is a "false teacher." Among those who oppose Bible classes, any person who voices an opinion in favor of them is labeled a "false teacher." All who do not oppose colleges, orphan homes, missionary societies, or instrumental music are considered "false teachers" by some. So mixed and muddled is the situation that every person in the disciple brotherhood is viewed as a "false teacher" by many of his other brethren.[14]

The Greek word *pseudodidaskalos* **is found only once in the new covenant scriptures, occurring in 2 Peter 2:1.**

> **The word** *pseudo* **carries with it the idea of deliberate and intentional falsehood. The teacher under consideration is not only lying but he is conscious of the fact that he is lying. He utters premeditated falsehood with the purpose of beguiling or deceiving unwary or unstable souls. He is frequently motivated by love for gain or prestige. This is brought out in the context where the term occurs. The following things are affirmed of the** *pseudodidaskalos***: (1) They will secretly introduce destructive sects; (2) They will even deny the Lord that bought them; (3) They will induce many to become licentious; (4) They will cause the very way of truth to be reviled; (5) In their greed they will exploit their hearers with false words.**[15]

Given the fact that none of us knows all there is to know, should we all be regarded as "false teachers" because of our lack of knowledge? We may be tempted to avoid the responsibility of listening to a brother whose diligent study of the Word has led him to heights of knowledge and understanding that exceed our

own— just as the Sanhedrin did to Stephen, grinding their teeth and stopping their ears. Yet, they bear the responsibility to this day for having rejected one whose vision far exceeded their own.

Although the term "false teacher" is quickly assigned to anyone who does not agree with the current interpretation of non-negotiable doctrines by which a group is identified as faithful, it is never applied in scripture to one who, while affirming the authenticity of scripture as the Word of God, honestly misunderstands its meaning. In scripture, a false teacher was regarded as *false* because of his *dishonesty*, not because of his *ignorance*.

New Covenant

In commenting on his earlier concept of the new covenant, Ketcherside reflects the thinking of many of the contemporary heirs of the Stone-Campbell tradition:

> **I know the problem. I can relate to it. I was nurtured from the beginning of my Christian career on the idea that the primitive church was an exact and meticulous pattern for all subsequent congregations to imitate. . . . I regarded the new covenant scriptures as a written code of laws functioning in the same capacity as the law of Moses. It had not yet dawned upon me what John meant when he said, "The law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." I thought Jesus had nailed one law to the cross and handed another one down. So I majored in the law but I minored in grace and truth.[16]**

In his tenth installment of "Adventures in Religion," Ketcherside observes that the ultimate objective of God is to provide eternal life to those who put their faith in what Christ did on their behalf. "Eternal life" is defined as knowing God (John 17:3). However, to "know" God in this way means something deeper than mere intellectual awareness of his

existence. Rather, it refers to personal intimacy or experience. It is in this sense that "Adam *knew* his wife, Eve." For God had ordained that "a man will leave his father and mother and be *united* to his wife, and they will become *one flesh*" (Genesis 2:24).

So it is, in a spiritual sense, that "he who is *joined* to the Lord becomes *one spirit* with him" (1 Corinthians 6:17). In this regard, Paul compares the physical intimacy of marriage to the spiritual intimacy between Christ and the church when he writes: "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be *united* to his wife, and the two will become *one flesh*. This is a profound mystery— but I am talking about Christ and the church" (Ephesians 5:31-32).

Eternal life is nothing less than the very life of God himself. It is the life that Jesus had and which he promised to give to his followers. To experience this life, we must receive it from its source. To experience that life is to *know* God. But law cannot produce life (Galatians 3:21). Ketcherside writes:

> **It is at this juncture that legalism reveals its futility and emptiness. It is the stone given to him who asks for bread, the serpent passed to him who asks for a fish. Not only can it not satisfy hunger, but it leaves one weak and faint from disappointment. . . . It is my conviction that legalism stems from a misunderstanding of the relationship sustained by the written word to the Living word.**[17]

Ketcherside continues:

> **Law cannot produce life. . . . The bestowal of life is outside the province of law. For that reason the new covenant is "a covenant expressed not in a written document, but in a spiritual bond; for the written law condemns to death, but the Spirit gives life" (2 Cor. 3:6). The new covenant system is not one which presents Jesus as pointing to a book as our source of hope, but one which presents a book pointing to Jesus as our hope. A failure to**

understand this has produced a generation which can quote the book but still does not know Jesus. It is possible to have as head full of scripture and a heart empty of the Savior. . . . Men had the new covenant written in their hearts and possessed eternal life years before the apostles wrote the first word of the new covenant scriptures.[18]

He then warns:

> **The grave danger is that men will make the mistake of thinking that in possessing the scripture they have eternal life and they will exalt the scriptures to the place of the Son. . . . The purpose of the written word is not to give life but to testify of Jesus. One may be mistaken about many things in the written word as all of us are and still his eternal life will not be affected for the simple reason that life is not invested in the scriptures. Certainly they are essential to growth and development of maturity and one will be stunted to the extent he does not grasp them and revise and amend his life according to them, but life is in the Son. If one is right about Jesus he may be wrong about many things and still be saved; if he is wrong about Jesus he may be right about everything else and still be lost.[19]**

Finally, it should be noted that Ketcherside's preferred designation for the writings that are commonly referred to as the "New Testament" is the phrase "the new covenant scriptures." It is likely he referred to them in this way to avoid the mistaken impression that those twenty-seven books comprise the "new covenant." In 1969, he wrote:

> **A great deal of confusion exists in our world because men confuse the covenants, or testaments, of God with the scriptures written to a covenant people. God exhibited himself as a covenant-making God, having chosen this method by which to establish relationship with the rational beings of his creation who inhabit the earth. He announced numerous covenants, but there were two of such importance as to be designated the first and second testaments, or the old and new covenants. . . . Both were**

> written covenants, but neither was written by man. The first was written upon two tablets of stone, by the finger of God; the second upon fleshy tables of the heart by the Holy Spirit.[20]

He further observes that "not one word of the new testament was written with pen and ink," as Paul points out in 2 Corinthians 3:3, adding, "Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God." Ketcherside then concludes:

> It is that very same confidence which makes me dare to say that there are not twenty-seven books in the new testament. The new covenant is not a written code as was the old, . . . The new testament is the glorious new agreement, announced by God, and inscribed on the sensitized heart of every recipient of grace. It is personal, enabling us to "reflect like mirrors the glory of the Lord."[21]

Finally, he writes:

> The new testament is not a book. It is not a compilation of writings. . . . The new covenant is a person and the relationship created by the new testament is a personal relationship.[22]

Heresy

In July of 1961, Ketcherside published an essay titled "Analysis of Heresy," in which he analyzes the modern use of the word by heirs of the Restoration Movement and examines the meaning of the original word from which the word "heresy" is translated. He writes:

> The immediate question before us concerns the meaning of "heresy." I consider this one of the most important studies we have ever made. It is not an exaggeration to say that the hope of answering the prayer

of Jesus for the unity of all believers may actually hinge upon our arriving at a correct understanding of the term. . . .[23]

What is heresy as it is today regarded by these various "Churches of Christ"? The answer is that it is any view or opinion which differs with the position of the party. A man must either conform in every respect to the partisan thinking or he is branded as a heretic and rejected. Thus "heresy" differs with each party.[24]

What is "heresy" in one "Church of Christ" is regarded as "sound doctrine" in another. Let us illustrate. One party holds that Bible classes in which to teach the word of God constitute a departure from "the apostolic pattern." Any person in their number who verbally disagrees is judged guilty of "heresy" and rejected. In the same town there will be a party which holds that Bible classes are justified by the scriptures. To oppose that position is "heresy." When these debate with each other as they often do, the discussion is not between brethren who receive each other but between "heretics" who mutually reject each other.[25]

Ketcherside then observes:

The word "heresy" is merely the Anglicized form of the Greek *hairesis*. Basically it means "choice, option." It is used nine times in the new covenant scriptures. In the King James Version it is rendered "heresy" four times and "sect" five times. It is applied to the Sadducees in Acts 5:17, "Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and were filled with indignation." It is applied to the Pharisees in Acts 15:5, "But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed . . ." Paul declares that "after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee" (Acts 26:5). The Pharisees and Sadducees each constituted a sect or heresy among the Jews. That which made them a heresy was not what they believed or taught, but the fact that

each constituted a party or *sect*.[26]

Ketcherside then quotes Dr. George Campbell and Alexander Campbell:

> **Dr. George Campbell in his "Preliminary Dissertations on the Gospels" says of heresy, "The word was not, in its earliest application, conceived to convey any reproach in it, since it was indifferently used either of a party approved, or of one disapproved, by the writer." Alexander Campbell in "The Christian System" writes thus: "As the word sect or heresy found only in the Acts of the Apostles and Epistles, does always in the former simply mean a party without any regard to its tenets, the term has nothing in it either reproachful or honorable, nothing virtuous or vicious."[27]**

> **No opinion constitutes heresy for heresy is the "party spirit" as *hairesis* is translated in Galatians 5:20 in the Revised Standard Version. A man can be wrong in a matter of doctrine and not have the party spirit; he can be right doctrinally and be guilty of the party spirit. Thus one can be correct in doctrinal matters and be a heretic. A heretic is not one who holds an unorthodox position, but is a factious man. For this reason the Revised Standard Version rendering of Titus 3:10 reads: "As for a man who is factious, after admonishing him once or twice, have nothing more to do with him." No one is quite so factious as the man who thinks he knows all that can be known and who demands that everyone else give in to his views as the price of peace. Some of the most contentious people I know brand all who differ with them as heretics, while those whom they label as heretics may be mild, gentle and easy to be entreated.[28]**

Ketcherside continues:

> ***Young's Literal Translation* renders Titus 3:10, "A sectarian man after a first and second admonition be rejecting." A sectarian man is one who devises partisan**

tests and separates from his brethren or drives them out if they do not concur with his views. Any person who makes a test of fellowship out of anything which God has not made a condition of salvation, and who holds himself aloof from his brethren on that basis is a sectarian man. He is a heretic. He regards his party as the church of God on earth and his attitude is divisive and factious. Edgar J. Goodspeed translates the passage: "If a man is inclined to a sect, after warning him once or twice, have nothing to do with him."[29]

And finally, he quotes from Albert Barnes:

> **Commenting on Titus 3:10, Albert Barnes says of the term heretic, "The true notion of the word is that of one who is a promoter of a sect or party. The man who makes divisions in a church, instead of aiming to promote unity, is the one who is intended. Such a man may form sects and parties on some points of doctrine on which he differs from others, or on some custom, religious rite, or peculiar practice; he may make some unimportant matter a ground of distinction from his brethren, and may refuse to have fellowship with them, and endeavor to get up a new organization. Such a man, according to Scripture usage, is a heretic, and not merely one who holds a different doctrine from that which is regarded as orthodoxy."[30]**

Conclusion

In surveying the task of restoring the vocabulary of the Holy Spirit, Ketcherside understood well that restoration requires time, as it is a matter of both spiritual and intellectual growth. To that end, he advised patience. Much has been done, over many years, to create a tradition of intolerance toward those who fail to see things as we see them. In that regard he wrote:

> **While we are being led to see the significance of**

> **these matters we must exercise a great deal of patience toward those who continue to advocate human traditional definitions and positions which we now know to be in error. We must regard with charity those who ridicule and make light of growth and advancement in knowledge, realizing that all such brethren are motivated by fear and driven by fright. Men must have time to mature in their thinking, and the maturation process is always hindered when partisan alliances enter in. We will gain nothing for the cause we love more than life by personal attacks upon those who cannot concur in our thinking. Indeed, such personal attacks are always the resort of weak men with weak causes. One who is Christ-centered in thought seeks neither to elevate men nor to derogate them.[31]**

Among other words whose modern usage Ketcherside challenged were terms such as *chance*, *secular*, *minister*, and *full-time service*. Although some of these are addressed in the essays listed for further study, the scope of this work did not allow for their specific treatment.

For Additional Study

The following is a list of articles by W. Carl Ketcherside that discuss the topic of the current chapter in greater detail. All of Ketcherside's essays are available in volumes 1 and 3 of the *e-book* series *The Works of W. Carl Ketcherside*, accessible on Amazon.com and archive.org.

Faith

- **"The One Faith."** *Mission Messenger* **(October 1965): 145.**

New Covenant

- **"The New Covenant."** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1960): 1.**
- **"The Big Mistake."** *Mission Messenger* **(October 1968): 152.**
- **"The Complete Eclipse."** *Mission Messenger* **(April 1969): 61.**
- **"Living Letters."** *Mission Messenger* **(May 1969): 77.**

Secular and Sacred

- **"Holy Places and Days."** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1966): 145.**
- **"Secular and Holy."** *Mission Messenger* **(October 1975): 156.**

Truth

- **"The Realm of Truth."** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1967):**

39.

Worship

- **"Introduction to Worship."** *Mission Messenger* **(August 1966): 129.**
- **"The Reasonable Worship."** *Mission Messenger* **(October 1971): 145.**

Miscellaneous Scriptural Vocabulary

- **"Are They Apostates?"** *Mission Messenger* **(July 1961): 9.**
- **"Defining My Purpose."** *Mission Messenger* **(January 1974): 1.**
- **"Confusion of Tongues."** *Ensign* **10 (February 1978): 5.**
- **"Transforming Speech."** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1974): 33.**
- **"Vocabulary Problems."** *Mission Messenger* **(April 1969): 49.**
- **"Doctrine and Doctrines."** *Mission Messenger* **(May 1963): 77.**
- **"Another Gospel."** *Mission Messenger* **(December 1974): 188.**
- **"Letters I Receive."** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1975): 139.**
- **"Error and Sin."** *Mission Messenger* **(February 1974): 26.**
- **"False Teachers."** *Mission Messenger* **(August 1961): 11.**
- **"Jealousy and Envy."** *Mission Messenger* **(February 1967): 17.**
- **"Through the Dust."** *Mission Messenger* **(February 1967): 19.**
- **"About Heretics."** *Integrity* **(June 1976): 3.**
- **"What Is Heresy?"** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1963): 39.**
- **"Gospel and Doctrine."** *Mission Messenger* **(February**

1973): 17.

- **"The Most Abused Word."** *Ensign* **3 (March 1989): 43.**
- **"The Backlash."** *Mission Messenger* **(August 1971): 117.**
- **"Acts of Worship."** *Mission Messenger* **(October 1966): 16.**

Chapter 3

BAPTISM AND BROTHERS IN PROSPECT

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Introduction

For Carl Ketcherside, baptism is "*the immersion in water of a believing penitent, in obedience to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ***,"**[1] **"***the enabling act by which a proper subject is translated, or transferred, from the domain of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son***."**[2] **"***It is the inductive act by which he enrolls in the fellowship of the saved ones***."**[3]

Since "No man can do what God requires by doing something else,"[4] **when we speak of baptism we must mean the same thing the Spirit meant when he used the word. Any other action would not be baptism as defined by the Spirit.**

While Ketcherside was unquestionably a seminal thinker, his thinking was clearly influenced by the writings of Thomas and Alexander Campbell, whom he frequently quoted. In his *Christian System***, Campbell wrote:**

> **But the grandeur, sublimity and beauty of the foundation of hope, and of ecclesiastical or social union, established by the author and founder of Christianity, consisted in this,— that the belief of one fact, and that upon the best evidence in the world, is all that is requisite, as far as faith goes, to salvation. The belief of this one fact, and submission to one institution expressive of it, is all that is required of Heaven to admission into the church.**[5]

Ketcherside was indebted to Campbell for this statement, which helped him to "envision the magnificence of the divine purpose and plan" at a time when he was under the mistaken impression that he was free. He continues:

> **It helped me to receive God's children as he receives us all, without questioning the content of the mental baggage which they bring with them on their journey from the realm of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son.**[6]

The one *fact* Campbell referred to was that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah. And the one *institution* to which the believer must submit is baptism into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. All who have believed the one fact, based on the evidence, and have submitted to the one institution— the one *act* of baptism— are disciples in the fullest sense of the word, *regardless of what they believe about other things*. This was the position Ketcherside held from the time of his spiritual transformation (from 1953–1957) until the day he died.

It was his contention that such a view would allow all believers to receive and accept one another on the same basis upon which Christ received each of us (Romans 15:7)— in all of our ignorance and imperfection— without anyone needing to give up a single truth he ever held.[7]

Over the years, Ketcherside was asked to clarify his thinking about baptism as it relates to several topics— enumerated below. While he openly responded to such challenges, he always did so with an awareness that "no one knows anything as he ought to know." His first resort, when responding to queries, was always to quote from the scriptures. In the absence of such, he would give his opinion and explain the logic by which it was derived. When there was no indication as to what God might do or think about a matter, he would conclude that such things must wait for a final answer from God himself. However, he was always insistent that no one should allow another to control his thinking *down here* who cannot assume responsibility for it *up there*.

Baptism and the Approval of God

Since our finite nature prevents us from being wholly free from distortion in our thinking, it is difficult to view any subject objectively. Furthermore, we tend to think disparagingly of all

who differ with our point of view and attribute their disagreement to insincerity. However, none of us sees anything perfectly, or as he *ought* to see.

When considering the positive ordinances of God, such as baptism, some disregard their value, elevating grace to such a degree that the ordinances is disregarded. Others, by contrast, elevate the ordinance to such importance that they render the mercy of God ineffective. The former are unsafe *theorists*, while the latter are unwise *legalists*. Since God has always made his blessings available to humankind through positive ordinances, to speak disparagingly of them is to sit in judgment of God himself, and to attempt to soften them is folly.

A consideration of the ordinances of God as a means of being acceptable to him raises the question: Are we judged by him based on the amount of our knowledge and understanding, or on our affection for him and our attitude toward His will?

Paul's statement, "If any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any man love God, the same is known of him" (1 Cor. 8:2–3, KJV), clearly indicates that God's recognition of us is not based on our degree of knowledge, which is *always* imperfect, but on the extent to which we love. As Ketcherside observes:

> **A man who loves God a lot, but has little knowledge, is better off than one who knows a lot but loves God but little.[8]**

If I have perfect knowledge without love, "I am nothing" (1 Corinthians 13:2), says Paul. "But if anyone loves God, he is known by God" (1 Corinthians 8:3).

While voluntary ignorance is a sin, involuntary ignorance is not. God does not expect the blind to see, but blindness resulting from having closed one's eyes constitutes willful defiance and a disregard for all light.

The author notes that:

> **We are instructed, under the reign of the Messiah, to enroll students in His school by immersing them; and to announce salvation from past sins on the basis of faith and immersion.[9]**

Those who hear this announcement and reject its terms are in willful rebellion against the King and will be lost. But what about those who never hear the message or lack the opportunity to respond appropriately in their lives? Such matters, Ketcherside says, remain in the realm of his mercy. However, he opines:

> **It is my opinion, based upon my feeble understanding of the scriptures, that such will be accepted of Him.[10]**

Those who make our hope dependent upon knowledge and understanding— with little or no regard for motive or intent— disregard, flaunt, and set aside the immersion of all who did not understand at the time that it was to secure a certain blessing. They are told that the human error they were taught about baptism negated God's grace— that although they believed and were immersed, their ignorance rendered God's promise null and void. To this, Ketcherside responds:

> **When a man believes that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, repents of his sins, and is immersed on the basis of that faith,** *it is unto the remission of sins*! **It makes no difference if he has some wrong notions, or if he has received some false impressions, when he complies with God's positive ordinance because of his faith in God's Son, he is inducted into all the blessings and privileges attendant upon the state into which such immersion introduces him, whether he knew what they were or not.[11]**

Ketcherside goes on to point out that "remission of sins" is a judicial act that takes place in the mind of God. "It becomes

effective to a penitent sinner upon belief in *one fact* and obedience to *one act*, conditioned upon that belief."[12]

When Peter commanded people on the day of Pentecost to repent and be immersed for the remission of sins, he was not specifying the degree of knowledge required to render the act valid before God, nor was he assigning a proper motive for baptism. In fact, to be immersed simply to receive remission of sins might well be selfish, for it is the performance of an act purely with the view of receiving something of greater value in return.

Since Jesus, who always acted out of divine love, based his submission to immersion upon a desire to "fulfill all righteousness," it is reasonable to conclude that:

> **When any person yields himself to the same act on that basis, he acts from the highest motive, and we have no right to set ourselves up as an inquisition or judicial court, and interrogate him as to the degree of his knowledge or understanding of God's plans, purposes and promises at the time. A lot of folk cannot understand the difference between "baptism unto remission" and "*knowing* that baptism is unto remission."[13]**

God's mercy is not made available to us on the basis of our knowledge, nor is His power limited by our ignorance.

Finally, in this regard, "for the remission of sins" is only one of the multiple purposes of baptism as set forth in scripture (Ketcherside identifies nine). To elevate one above the others is without scriptural warrant, with one exception: for the purpose of doing what God requires. This is the basis upon which Jesus was immersed, and there can be none higher.

Baptism as a Test of Fellowship

By "fellowship," Ketcherside refers to the common sharing of the Spirit of God by all sincere believers who have been immersed into Christ. It is the presence of God's own Spirit— the life of God— which is promised to all who come to be hidden with Christ in God. This is the "gift of the Holy Spirit" to which Peter referred on the day of Pentecost. It is a partaking of, or joint participation in, the divine nature, which definitively determines one's relationship to God and to all his other children.

Fellowship is based upon sonship. It is brotherhood resulting from a common Fatherhood. The fellowship in Christ Jesus includes every person on earth in whom the Holy Spirit dwells and is, therefore, designated "the fellowship of the Spirit."

Ketcherside enumerates several reasons for regarding baptism essential for entrance into the fellowship:

> **1. The fellowship embraces those who are in Christ Jesus. Whatever is requisite to bring one into Christ is essential to induction into the fellowship.**
>
> **2. The fellowship embraces those whose sins have been forgiven and who have entered into covenantal relationship through the indwelling Spirit.**
>
> **3. The fellowship embraces those who have been brought into relationship with the Godhood.**
>
> **4. The of God at Corinth, composed of those who were sanctified in Christ Jesus, that is who were saints by calling, was made up of those who were distinctly said to have been "called into the fellowship."[14]**

There is no record in scripture of anyone being regarded as part of the community of the saved who had not been baptized into Christ. All such ideas are post-apostolic and, therefore, without scriptural precedent. On the one hand, some would

remove the limitations God has set, while others would impose limitations he has not placed. The first group would receive those whom God does not, and the second would exclude many whom God has received. Regarding his own views, Ketcherside states candidly:

> **I do not regard as being in the one body those who have not been baptized for the simple reason that this is a condition of entrance established by God. I hold that entrance into the fellowship of the saints is conditioned upon belief of one fact and obedience to one act in validation of that fact. That fact is the only foundation of Christian union and communion.[15]**

Regarding spiritual fellowship, Ketcherside frequently stated: "I will make nothing a test of fellowship which God has not made a condition of salvation." Since God has made immersion a requirement for birth into his family, it must be regarded as a term of fellowship.

> **Untested faith is like an unstamped letter. What it says may be good but it is not going anywhere. Obedience is the validation of belief, and our acceptance of the Lordship of Jesus is tested at the very outset. "He that believeth and is baptized" . . . These are the words of Jesus and no amount of equivocation will alter or abrogate them. So long as the gospel is valid, this will constitute the heaven-ordained response to it.[16]**

Baptism and the Pious Unimmersed

There are many who are devout in their devotion to Christ but have been taught that baptism is something inward. Others have been trained to believe that baptism is, as the English dictionary confirms, "the Christian religious rite of sprinkling water on to a person's forehead . . . symbolizing purification or regeneration and admission to the Christian Church." What, then, should be our attitude toward sincere men and women who

have been raised in a denominational tradition that rejects all outward symbols and formal ordinances, or who have been taught that they were baptized when they were sprinkled?

Ketcherside's response begins with personal responsibility before God, which, according to scripture, is conditioned upon three bases:

> **One is accountable for what he knows and will not do; for what he could know and refuses to learn; and for what he professes to know and will not practice.[17]**

These conditions are all related to the voluntary exercise of the will, since the will is the determining factor in life. But only God can know whether one could have heard and learned. Only an infinite mind can determine the degree of one's responsibility at any given time. Consequently, Ketcherside explains:

> **It does not at all disturb me to think that many pious individuals who love God and their fellowmen within a "denominational tradition" will walk the golden streets. I do not limit the grace of God, nor seek to frustrate it. . . . I am not asked to determine the final destiny of man, nor called upon to decide with whom I shall associate in heaven. I am under divine compulsion to recognize the terms of citizenship for the kingdom of heaven upon earth as I understand them. I am not authorized to enlarge the borders of Zion nor to restrict them. That is the prerogative of the king and I am but a subject, a very weak and unprofitable servant. It is my understanding that the King has decreed that the terms of citizenship involve a pledge of allegiance unto his sovereignty and immersion into his death.[18]**

With regard specifically to sprinkling, Ketcherside notes:

> **Regardless of what else may be said about it, sprinkling or pouring do not constitute baptism in the scriptural context. When I speak of baptism I must mean**

the same thing Jesus and the apostles meant when they spoke of it, else my words have no relationship to the scriptural content. If I use a word they used but mean something else than they meant, I am either deceived or a deceiver. . . . If baptism, as Jesus employed the term, meant a burial or immersion, it follows that one who has not been immersed has not been baptized. . . . Therefore, as cruel as it may appear to a modern and vacillating world, I do not consider those who have used a form unauthorized by Jesus, unsanctioned by the Spirit, and unknown to the apostles, as being in the fellowship of the congregation of saints.[19]

Regarding the pious unimmersed, Ketcherside wrote:

> **Here then are my conclusions. I will regard them as begotten of my Father and quickened by faith in the womb of grace. I will treat them as believers and not as pagans or heathen. I will go among them at their invitation to share any insights I may have in God's great revelation, and I will rejoice in and encourage any deeds of kindness and mercy in which they engage for the betterment of the world and the improvement of the moral and spiritual atmosphere breathed by fallen man! . . . I will not conclude that all of them are bound for perdition but will allow God to judge their final destiny. His disposition of all who believe in Jesus must be according to his sovereign will and I will but attest that "his judgments are true and righteous altogether."**[20]

But to regard the unimmersed as having been brought into the family relationship on the same basis as those who have been immersed would render the testimony of the scriptures on the matter "both useless and meaningless." As he says, "I cannot do and answer to my God with a clear conscience."[21]

Baptism of the Holy Spirit

In response to the idea that the "one baptism" was the

baptism of the Holy Spirit, Ketcherside is unequivocal: "I do not think that 'the baptism of the Holy Spirit' or in the Holy Spirit is the one baptism. It never was." Furthermore, says Ketcherside, "I do not hold that 'the baptism of the Holy Spirit' is available today, not because God's power is in any sense lessened, but because his purpose in respect to it has long since been served."[22]

The purpose of the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" was not to enable men to speak in tongues. Such were secondary to the purpose of the baptism and were to accomplish a different objective. That they were given in conjunction with it is of little significance, since many others received the gift of tongues who were not baptized in the Holy Spirit.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit occurred only twice: First, it occurred on Pentecost, at the time of the formation of the spiritual body of Christ as a new creation. At that time, the Spirit did not fall upon every Jew. Only a select few received the baptism of the Spirit and they were those who announced the good news to others who were present.

The second occurrence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit occurred when Peter was visiting the home of A Roman centurion, a God-fearing Gentile.

> **The time had come to demonstrate that those who were afar off were to join with those who were near. The family of Cornelius was chosen to receive the baptism as indicative that the Gentiles were to be admitted on the same terms as God accepted the Jews. Simon Peter, a kosher Jew, who had never in his life entered into a Gentile home or eaten with an uncircumcised person, was selected to take the gospel to them.[23]**

While Peter was speaking, "the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message." When the circumcised believers who had accompanied Peter saw that the Holy Spirit "had been poured

out even on the Gentiles," Peter said, "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have" (Acts 10:45-47).

Just as baptism in water is a one-time experience for each person who becomes a new creation, the baptism of the Holy Spirit was a one-time experience— for both Jew and Gentile. "They were no more twain, but one body. A new humanity, consisting of both circumcised and uncircumcised had been produced. Following the spiritual foundation of the one body, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is never again mentioned."[24] It is not referred to a single time in any epistle addressed to the saints of God.

There are those who come to a crisis in their lives and are forced to face up to the real choice of whether they shall truly follow Jesus. Some of them, in their time of deep need, throw themselves upon the mercy of God and find that he is near.

> **Many who find inner peace and real joy and relief, imagine, in the ecstasy of the moment, that this is "the baptism of the Holy Spirit." I do not think it is so at all. But if they mistake their experience for "the baptism of the Holy Spirit," I shall not fight or argue or debate with them. I have given you my own personal understanding derived from my study of the word of the Spirit. I do not intend to bind it upon any person nor to discredit any experience or change in life-style. Praise God for such changes![25]**

Brothers in Prospect

The concept of "brothers in prospect," given notoriety by Carl Ketcherside over the last thirty years of his life, first appeared in his essay, "The Sheep on the Hills," in the March issue of *Mission Messenger* for 1957, only the eighth of his essays written after the period of radical transformation in his thinking

that took place from 1951–1956. After calling attention to the fact that God's sheep have been divided by the very leaders to whom they looked for guidance and instruction, he insists that it is God's will that they be gathered together into one flock under a single shepherd. In this context, he writes:

> **Our appeal goes forth to all of the scattered flock wandering over the hills which have been created by men. We would do our humble best to search and seek after every good and honest heart, "scattered upon the face of all the earth." Every person in the whole wide world who possesses such a heart is** *my brother***— either** *in prospect* **or** *reality***!**[26]

In November of that same year, Ketcherside published his book, *The Kingdom of the Messiah***, in which he comments on the statement of Jesus in Matthew, "Truly I say to you that the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going ahead of you into the kingdom of God." He writes:**

> **"Going into the kingdom" as used here simply meant to believe in the testimony of John that the Reign was approaching, and to make such amendment of life as was compatible with the information. Such persons as did this were entering the kingdom** *in prospect***.**[27]

Three months later, as he decries the idea that Baptists and Methodists should be assigned to the realm of darkness, he makes a distinction between brothers in prospect and brothers in fact— or in reality— noting that:

> **Every honest, sincere believer in the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth, is my brother, either** *in prospect* **or** *in fact***. If such a believer has submitted to immersion on the basis of his faith in Jesus, he is my brother** *in reality***, a child of God, and a member of his family.**[28]

For the next five year, Ketcherside makes no further reference to children of God in prospect. By the time he takes it

up again, he had come to be widely regarded as an enemy of "the Lord's church" across all of the factions into which it had been splintered. In April of 1962, the editor of the *Firm Foundation* directed an editorial against his position, titled "Blind in One Eye," in which he charged that Ketcherside had "swung from the extreme of the narrowest of sectarian spirits to the broadest cover-everything-stand-for-nothing liberalism." "Brother Ketcherside is blind in one eye," the editorial continued, "and if the blind lead the blind they both will fall into the ditch."[29]

Although Ketcherside submitted essays in refutation of the accusations against him, along with a request that they be published in the same venue in which the accusations had appeared, the editor ultimately denied his request. In the spring of 1963, Ketcherside disclosed the details of Editor Lemmons' refusal in an essay titled "The Making of History."[30] He similarly described the editor's perspective in the article "Why We Did Not Run Ketcherside's Articles," which appeared in the June 4, 1963 issue of the *Firm Foundation*[31]

The organizing theme of *Mission Messenger* for 1963 was "The Unity of the Spirit." That same year, the editor of the *Firm Foundation*, Rueul Lemmons, published nine essays[32] in which he took issue with various aspects of Ketcherside's proposal for unity— which Lemmons described as an "absolutely counterfeit proposal for unity in spite of differences."[33] These were re-published in the pages of *Mission Messenger* along with Ketcherside's reply to each. In one of the editorials, the second in a series on "Hidden Poison and Body of Error," Lemmons wrote:

> **4. "He [Ketcherside] teaches that every sincere believer in the Messiahship of Jesus is a child of God, whether he is ever baptized or not, and is now his brother or sister in prospect."**
>
> **Brother Ketcherside says "this statement is not true." Yet here is a direct quotation from Brother**

> **Ketcherside taken from a California unity meeting: "I regard every sincere conscientious person on the face of the earth who believes in Jesus as the Son of God as God's child and my brother in prospect. He is God's child because he has been begotten by my Father, but he has not been born into the family relationship yet . . . so he is my brother in prospect and God's child by the begetting process." This is the quotation that made us level the charge. According to this direct quotation from him, Brother Ketcherside must accept as God's child every person who sincerely believes in the Messiahship of Jesus whether baptized or not. In one sense nearly every sinner is a child of God in prospect— that is, there is a possibility of his later being born into the family of God.[34]**

Ketcherside's reply, "Answer to Objections (2),"[35] contained his first reference to "brothers in prospect" since 1958. In it he adds clarity to his earlier distinction between a brother "in prospect" and a brother "in reality." To the accusation that he "teaches that every sincere believer in the Messiahship of Jesus is a child of God," he responds:

> **This statement is not true. I teach that every sincere person who believes that Jesus is the Christ is *begotten* of God (1 John 5:1) and I must love all such because I love the one who begot them. Baptism is the delivery of such believers into the family of God. Before they enter the family relationship they are God's children *in prospect* and my brothers or sisters *in prospect.* They are no more children of God before they are delivered than any other *embryo* or *foetus* is a child. My responsibility toward them is to act as an obstetrician or midwife and bring them to birth, i.e., deliver them into the fellowship.[36]**

It appears to be a little-known fact within the Stone-Campbell restoration movement that Ketcherside was not the first writer within the tradition to assign a favorable status to the pious unimmersed, as opposed to that of their being lost. In 1842, Alexander Campbell wrote in the *Millennial Harbinger*:

> **The blood of Christ, then, *really* cleanses us who believe from all sin. Behold the goodness of God in giving us a *formal* proof and token of it, by ordaining a baptism expressly "for the remission of sins!" The water of baptism, then, *formally* washes away our sins. The blood of Christ *really* washes away our sins. Paul's sins were *really pardoned* when he believed, yet he had no solemn *pledge* of the fact, no *formal* acquittal, no *formal* purgation of his sins, until he washed them away in the water of baptism.[37]**

Campbell maintained this position, regarding "Christians among the sects," for the remainder of his life. But he also stated that baptism was required "in order to admission into the present dispensation of the kingdom of God."[38]

In 1862, Campbell's biographer, Robert Richardson, writing in the *Millennial Harbinger* about whether strangers should share in the Lord's Supper, states:

> **When we say that there are "Christians among the sects," we do not mean Christians in the full sense, according to the requirements of the New Testament. We mean imperfect, *embryo Christians*, if you please, in certain most important points of the Christian profession, while, in other aspects, they may be regarded as full-grown, and even excelling in faith and works of charity. We use the same style employed by the Lord himself, when he said to Paul, persecuted at Corinth, "*I have much people in this city*" (italics added).[39]**

A century later, Ketcherside, using language reminiscent of Richardson, wrote:

> **Only those who are born are granted the privilege of becoming children of God. "But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God; who were born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12, 13). Prior to this they were in an *embryonic* or *foetal* stage. . . . I hold that those who believe and have not yet**

been immersed are God's *children in prospect* **and my** *brothers in prospect.*[40]

Again, in November of 1963, using the same metaphor as used by Richardson, Ketcherside further explains the distinctions between the embryonic stage of the believer, the period of gestation, and birth into the family relationship:

> **One is begotten of God when the Spirit quickens him through the gospel upon his belief that Jesus is the Son of God. It is believing this which produces life (John 20:31). The period of gestation differs with the individual. When one is immersed, he is born into the family relationship. Prior to that he is God's** *child in prospect* **and my** *brother in prospect***. . . . A believer receives the Holy Spirit when born into the family relationship and becomes a brother** *in fact* **instead of** *in prospect***.**[41]

The following year, in response to the question "How do you regard those who believe in Jesus as the Son of God but who do not as yet understand the necessity of being immersed?" he wrote:

> **I regard them as having been begotten but not yet born. They are still "in the womb" but they have not yet been delivered. The gospel is the seed by which we are begotten and under the law of principal and agent one may be regarded as a father who first implants this seed (1 Cor. 4:14, 15). The offspring of God exist in** *embryonic* **and** *foetal* **form before they are children unless we conclude that belief of the gospel and baptism are one and the same act, or that they occur simultaneously in every case. All who believe the Message but have not yet been delivered through baptism, are God's** *children in prospect* **and my** *brethren in prospect***.**[42]

By far the most extensive treatment of the subject at hand is found in Ketcherside's essay of May 1973, "Baptism and Brethren." Here he responds to seven questions raised in an

interview with a small group of young preachers who had asked to meet with him to explore his position relative to the pious unimmersed. In his ten-page response to their queries we are better informed of the opposition he faced from brothers *in fact* **regarding his esteem for those whom he regarded as brothers** *in prospect***.**

To one of the questions, "What about this 'brothers in prospect' view that you are alleged to hold? Can you tell us what you mean by that expression?" he responded, again after the manner of Richardson:

> **I am astounded at the wounded "howl" raised by some of the guardians of orthodoxy and the keepers of the gate over the position that I occupy. When Paul was in Corinth, the center of lasciviousness, the Lord spoke to him at night in a vision and told him not to be afraid. He said, "For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee:** *for I have much people in this city***" (Acts 18:10). McGarvey says, "He called them** *his* **merely because he foresaw that under Paul's preaching they would yet believe." Evidently, then, they were** *children of God in prospect***. They were also** *brothers and sisters of Paul in prospect***.**
>
> **Before one is delivered into the new spiritual state he is begotten of the Spirit through the Word, which is the seed or sperm. He must pass through an** *embryonic stage* **in the spirit leading him to delivery. One is begotten of the gospel according to the apostle Peter, and his begettal takes place, not at the point of delivery, but at the point of faith. . . . So the penitent believer, begotten by the Spirit, is** *God's child in prospect* **and he is** *my brother in prospect***.**[43]

He goes on to call attention to the fact that one does not repent in order to be begotten, but *because* **he is begotten. Neither does he become alive when he is delivered into the family by immersion, else he is born of a dead faith. "Baptism changes our state, but faith operates before baptism to change**

life."

After the closing of *Mission Messenger*, Ketcherside wrote numerous essays for *Ensign Fair*, edited by R. L. (Pat) Kilpatrick. Here Ketcherside mentions "brothers in prospect" for what appears to be the last time— just four years prior to his death.

> **And every person on this shrinking globe who believes in Jesus with all of his heart and soul, and who eagerly seeks to do His will as He understands and knows it, is a child of my Father in prospect or reality. And he is my brother in the same way. For wherever my Father has a child there I have a brother or sister. And I have many more than I used to have. The family is growing larger for me at the same time it is growing smaller for others. But, never mind, one day when the light breaks through the fog which clouds their understanding they will also join in the great family. In the meantime, how they regard me is of little consequence.[44]**

Of all that Ketcherside ever wrote, perhaps nothing had quite the impact on Churches of Christ and conservative Christian Churches as the possibility of a "brother in prospect." The idea that the unimmersed— regardless of their degree of piety— could achieve any status with God, other than that of being eternally condemned, openly contradicted what these churches had come to regard as a foundational element in their self-identity as the exclusive body of Christ on earth. Their universal regard for baptism— *with the knowledge that* it is for the remission of sins— as the precise point in time at which one is translated from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light, found the concept of a "brother in prospect" to be an absolute absurdity— a contradiction of the non-negotiable presupposition by which, as they believed, their status with God was determined.

Of the factors contributing to the opposition of influential

leaders to this and other teachings of Carl Ketcherside, none was greater than the mistaken assumption that their own interpretations of scripture were *equivalent* to the "Word of God" or "The Truth." Having made the two equal— the text of scripture and their interpretation of scripture— they soon became deaf to attempts to call their interpretations into question or to distinguish them from the text of scripture.

After the manner of human creeds, such circular reasoning precluded any discovery of new truth or growth in the understanding of God's word, since all such growth would appear, to the undiscerning mind, to be at odds with "the Word of God." It was this type of thinking that led influential leaders to summarily dismiss as "error" or "false doctrine," anything Ketcherside wrote, since it failed to conform to what they referred to as "the Truth."

To accept uncritically what one is told to be the meaning of scripture, is to relinquish personal responsibility for one's thinking— a practice which the Protestant Reformation famously rejected. Given the fact that no one on earth has been designated by God as an official interpreter of scripture, understanding its meaning cannot be entrusted to a third party. Or as Ketcherside would say, "I will allow no one to control my thinking down here who cannot assume responsibility for it up there." Yet this responsibility has historically been assigned to church leaders, who studiously protect their flocks from exposure to thinking with which they are not in agreement.

While Ketcherside recognized the imperfect nature of his own understanding of scripture, his concern was with the fact that, for the past one hundred years, the scriptures had been interpreted in such a way as to render them self-contradictory— to justify division in the face of specific biblical instruction to the contrary. The difficulty for many in understanding Ketcherside, was the fact that he recognized division to have come about historically as the result of multiple, *interrelated*

misinterpretations of scripture which ran counter to the understanding of the founders of the movement. It was his contention that brethren must *first* recognize their essential unity, inherent in their sharing a common Spirit, and *then* work together, as brethren, to perfect their understanding of the will of the Father.

For Additional Study

The following is a list of articles by W. Carl Ketcherside that discuss the topic of the current chapter in greater detail. All of Ketcherside's essays are available in volumes 1 and 3 of the *e-book* series *The Works of W. Carl Ketcherside*, accessible on Amazon.com and archive.org.

Christian Baptism

- **"The Relation of Baptism to Fellowship."** *Mission Messenger* **(January 1964): 1.**
- **"The New Covenant."** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1960): 1.**

Baptism and the Approval of God

- **"Acceptable Unto God."** *Mission Messenger* **(April 1959): 6.**

Baptism as a Test of Fellowship

- **"Faith and Baptism."** *Mission Messenger* **(December 1972): 177.**

Baptism and the Pious Unimmersed

- **"Questions About Baptism."** *Mission Messenger* **(August 1973): 113.**

Baptism of the Holy Spirit

- **"One Baptism."** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1974): 134.**

Brothers in Prospect

- **"Baptism and Brethren."** *Mission Messenger* **(May 1973): 65.**
- **"The Sheep on the Hills."** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1957): 1.**
- **"Thoughts on Fellowship."** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1958): 5.**
- **"Answer to Objections."** *Mission Messenger* **(November 1963): 163.**
- **"Reply to the Foregoing."** *Mission Messenger* **(October 1963): 150.**
- **"Grace and Faith."** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1959): 5.**

Chapter 4

THE ONE-MAN PASTOR SYSTEM

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Introduction

"I have convictions, very deep ones, upon both of these matters [theological seminaries and the one-man minister system]. . . . But I do not deny that those who differ with me on these issues are my brethren."— *W. Carl Ketcherside*[1]

Throughout his lifetime, Carl Ketcherside regarded the one-man pastor system as (1) without scriptural precedent, (2) a hindrance to the spiritual development of the community of faith, (3) a usurpation of the responsibility of the elders or bishops, and (4) a manipulative mechanism for imposing a façade of doctrinal uniformity upon members of the body, without regard for their diversities of age, education, or level of mental acuity. In this belief, Ketcherside stood within the tradition of the Stone-Campbell restoration movement dating back to Alexander Campbell.

In his opposition to the one-man pastor, Ketcherside's primary focus was on its obstruction of the freedom of members of the body to mutually admonish and edify one another— each exercising whatever gift God may have given him— and to engage in the mutual exchange of insights into the meaning of the biblical text.

"Writing from the vantage point of 66 years of age, Ketcherside observed that we trick ourselves into thinking we do not have a clergy system by the names we use to designate its members. He continued:

> **But being a clergy man has little to do with whether "the common people" designate one by such titles as "Reverend" or "Right Reverend." One who appropriates to himself by reason of his status, the regulation and conduct of that worship which is the right of all, is a clergyman whether he admits it or not. What is the real difference in function between "the located evangelist"**

> **hired by a non-instrument Church of Christ, and the "pastor" hired by the Baptist Church a block down the street?[2]**

Throughout his essays, Ketcherside refers to the pastor system using a variety of terms. The principal designations he employed are listed below:

- **Hireling minister**
- **Located evangelist**
- **Located preacher**
- **Hireling clergy system**
- **Hireling ministry system**
- **Hireling pastor system**
- **Sectarian pastor system**
- **One-man hired pastor system**
- **One-man pastor system**
- **One-man hired minister**
- **One-man ministry**
- **One-man minister system**
- **One-man preacher pastor system**
- **A professional ministry**
- **Modern pastor system**
- **Professional pastor system**
- **Clergy system**
- **One man imported preacher-pastor**

Rather than designating a single individual as the exclusive exhorter of his brothers, Ketcherside identified the strongest New Testament precedent in what is often referred to as "mutual ministry."[3]

Historical Development

Like Alexander Campbell, the other early reformers

opposed the clergy system for multiple reasons, not the least of which was the control it exercised over the interpretation of scripture. Such control not only infringed upon the right to private judgment in interpreting scripture, but it also obstructed reformatory efforts by those who dissented from the orthodox view. In contrast, the reformers appear to have extended every male member the opportunity to address the assembly of believers for the purpose of mutual edification and permitted the free exchange of differing points of view.

Below are excerpts from journals edited by early reformers in which they express disapproval of the practice of having one man dominate the public edification of the assembled church. They were specifically opposed to one man assuming the role and authority of interpreter-in-chief, thereby depriving individuals of the right to interpret scripture according to conscience. While the selection of journals is clearly not exhaustive, it does represent the thinking of most leaders of the movement throughout much of the nineteenth century.

Alexander Campbell

In October of 1823, Alexander Campbell wrote:

> **No class or order of men that ever appeared on earth have obtained so much influence, or acquired so complete an ascendency over the human mind, as the clergy. The Christian clergy have exercised, for about fifteen hundred years, a sovereign dominion over the Bible, the consciences, and the religious sentiments of all nations professing Christianity. Even kings and emperors bowed with deference to their authority, acknowledging their supremacy, and not daring to wield the sceptre until consecrated and crowned by a minister of religion.**
>
> **Though vials of wrath have been poured from heaven upon the kingdom of the clergy; though many of**

them have gnawed their tongues and bit their lips with pain, at the loss of their former magnificent and mighty sway— yet, still their dominion, though much impaired, exists to an alarming extent; and their eagerness to have an unrivalled control over the public sentiment, in all religious affairs, remains unabated.

Behold the arrogance of their claims! and the peerless haughtiness of their pretensions! They have said, and of them many still say, they have an exclusive right, an *official* right, to affix the proper interpretation to the scriptures; to expound them in public assemblies; insomuch, that it would be presumptuous in a layman to attempt to exercise any of those functions which they have assumed.[4]

The following year, in response to a personal attack on his integrity, Campbell wrote:

I have, you know, declaimed and reasoned, and argued too, against the hireling clergy, and if one of them could make it appear that while I have labored more abundantly than any of the hirelings and taken nothing for it, yet I too was actuated by avarice and ambition; then I must fall into the same ranks and my influence be destroyed. . . . But conjectures avaunt![5]

From October 1823, through February 1824, Campbell wrote a series of five articles on "The Clergy" in which he outlined the two means by which the clergy gain such complete dominion over the Bible, the consciences, and the religious sentiments of mankind: (1) the pretense of a divine call to what is commonly called the work of the ministry, and (2) the confederation of themselves into associated bodies to secure the interests of religion, i.e.— the interests of the clergy. However, it seems doubtful that Campbell was referring to any "clergy system" within the movement under his leadership at the time.

The phrase "Kingdom of the Clergy" is found no fewer

than 27 times in the seven volumes of *The Christian Baptist* **(1823–1830) and at least twenty-nine times in the** *Millennial Harbinger* **(from 1830–1856).**

Robert Richardson

In 1829, Robert Richardson, using the pen name "Discipulus," wrote:

> **The proper order of God's house we believe to be plainly showed in the New Testament. Considering that there is no distinction among us, except that which diversity of gifts occasions, we think that he that is the greatest among us should be our servant, and that we are "***all brethren***." We meet every first day of the week to break bread, as was the practice of the first churches for three hundred years. Not being gagged by human law, we know that we are permitted and commanded to speak one by one in the congregation, to exhort, comfort, and edify one another.**[6]

A. Straith

In 1830, the following statement appeared in the *Christian Baptist***:**

> **We are told that the primitive christians persevered in the apostles' doctrine, (and where, pray, is it to be found? In the inspired written oracles of God, or in the blundering compositions of men?) and in the performance of an action termed** *koinonia***, and in prayers, as well as in the breaking of bread: and in other places that they met for mutual edification. But where is the command to listen to the harangues of uninspired, fallible, blundering clergymen?— A. Straith**[7]

Tobert Fanning

In 1844, prior to the commencement of the *Gospel Advocate*, its eventual founder, Tolbert Fanning, expressed an opinion concerning the pastor system in the *Christian Review*:

> **The best preacher in the world, preaching three times on every Lord's day, to keep the saints alive, will kill them spiritually; and without great care, eternally. Preachers should plant churches and set them in order, but permit the churches to attend to their own worship.[8]**

During the first 7 years after the founding of the *Advocate* in 1855— and prior to the four-year hiatus in its publication (1961–65) caused by the American Civil War— Fanning alone wrote at least 24 articles in which he spoke against the one-man pastor system, half of which appeared during the two years from 1857–58.

From the founding of the *Gospel Advocate* in 1855, through 1909, at least 325 articles were published in which the "pastor system," or its equivalent, is spoken of in negative terms or rejected in favor of a system of mutual edification. Among the authors of such articles, in addition to Fanning, were notable figures such as David Lipscomb, C. Kendrick, Jacob Creath, E. G. Sewell, J. M. Barnes, John T. Poe, F. D. Srygley, James A. Harding, J. C. McQuiddy, M. C. Kurfees, E. A. Elam, T. R. Burnett, John T. Hinds, J. D. Tant, John E. Dunn, James A. Allen, and Moses E. Lard.[9]

In 1858, Tolbert Fanning wrote:

> **Perhaps no subject has been discussed with more earnestness, for a few years past, than what most of our writers call the Pastorate. . . . Nine-tenths we presume of the church members of this age suppose that most, if not all, religious service should be performed by a single individual called Pastor. . . . Hence the pastorate has**

become one of the liberal learned, and popular professions. . . . There seems to be a determination that farmers, carpenters, blacksmiths, lawyers, traders, etc., are not good enough to perform the service of God, and consequently a "reverend class" must be raised up, to take this burden from the people, for pay. . . . Whilst we sincerely believe the Evangelists are the only persons authorized to organize congregations, and that they are the most important officers under Christ, we are forced to admit the failures in churches to grow and prosper is owing in a great degree to the fact that few preachers amongst the disciples of late years have taught the converts to walk in Christ Jesus. . . . It will be remembered that there is no instance in the New Testament of a single bishop, overseer, or pastor in a congregation, but we find them always in the plural number. . . . The practice of one man and he often a beardless lad, assuming the pastorate of a State, District, or even a congregation, we regard as downright Popery.[10]

Carroll Kendrick

Writing in September of 1866, Carroll Kendrick warns:

Bro. Cheek's letter indicates that he is preaching for and to the churches. This is certainly not the apostolic plan. The churches need teaching, not preaching, so much. Monthly preaching to churches is one phase of sectarianism that we should have guarded against. Setting evangelists as pastors, is another.[11]

Jacob Creath

In the August 5th edition of the Advocate for 1869, Jacob Creath wrote:

All the gifts of our churches are swallowed up in

"The Pastor." Our elders are a blank. They are as useless as a fifth wheel to a buggy. They are virtually abolished, and we had as well abolish— formally abolish them, and let "The Pastor" be chief cook and bottle-washer.[12]

David Lipscomb

Although Lipscomb first commented on the pastor system in September 1866, by the spring of 1873 his position became unmistakably clear in a lengthy article— four and a half pages, with two columns per page— titled "Preachers or Teachers." Because it offers a comprehensive rejection of the pastor system, the article is included in its entirety in the Appendix to this work. Below is an excerpt from the article:

> **After a church is planted, the idea of retaining a man to preach constantly for that congregation is foreign to the whole scope of biblical teaching. The church in its several members should be put to work and by this work or exercise of the members it should make increase to the building itself up in love. This is the Scriptural idea, and was the primitive order. The apostles planted churches, put them to work— went elsewhere, planted others and after awhile returned to see how they did, to confirm, establish and strengthen them, or they sent others well instructed to set in order the things that might be wanting or neglected in the worship or work of these congregations.**
>
> **They, the members, were to edify one another, exhort one another, admonish one another, watch over one another, confess their faults to each other, and pray one for another that their sins might be healed. No priestly head on earth could do all the exhortation, admonition, watching over the flock of God— hear all confessing of sins or do the praying for the remission of sins. . . . Preaching or teaching never yet made a man a Christian. He may thus be taught *how* to become a Christian.**

Theories on farming never made a man a farmer, doing the work of the farm makes the farmer.

> **It is the duty of a teacher . . . when planting a church, to remain with them and teach them to worship and work as God directs. But he can never successfully do this, by himself, continually doing all the speaking, exhorting, praying, etc. . . . One man doing all the exhorting to an audience, feeling it has nothing to do but to listen to the preacher, is killing to the life, energy and vitality of the church. God's order cannot be perverted or destroyed without evil results.**[13]

Were it not for certain stylistic differences between the two authors, the above article by Lipscomb could easily be mistaken for something subsequently written by Carl Ketcherside. In fact, there is little that Ketcherside wrote on the topic that was not stated herein by Lipscomb.

E. G. Sewell

In October of 1873, E. G. Sewell, who joined the *Advocate* **as an associate editor during 1868–69, wrote:**

> **This thing of calling preachers, and they generally young men, from some other church and section of country, and strangers at that, to take the oversight of the congregation, and act as the pastors, is something about which we read nothing in the Scriptures. . . . Nowhere in the Scriptures have we any instructions as to churches calling, or settling or removing pastors as in the modern acceptation of these terms. And if all Christians would give more time to the study of the Scriptures, and to the edification of one another, the present difficulties about pastors would soon be out of the way.**[14]

James A. Harding

In 1887, James A. Harding concludes:

> **There is not a word in the Bible about a church calling a preacher "to take charge of it," or "labor for it as its regular pastor;" not a word about the ability or inability of a church "to support a preacher;" not a word about the qualification which fits one to become a "pastor in charge." The silence is exceedingly suggestive, seeing that the religious papers of to-day are as abundantly full as the Bible is impressively silent on these themes. That the pastor-system of church edification and government is one of the greatest curses of modern times, is an established fact in my mind.[15]**

Moses E. Lard

In 1865, Moses Lard, writing in *Lard's Quarterly*, states:

> **There is no such function or position in the church as that of pastorate, to be filled by a special class of men different from the elders. . . . Now, in view of the truth as here stated, we can not but feel alarmed at the disposition on the part of many of our churches— a disposition which is clearly on the increase, to create a new office in the church, and to fill it with a class of men wholly unknown to the Bible. Our modern pastor is not the pastor of the New Testament; but the simple preacher of the gospel, transformed into a pastor, and performing a function which properly belongs to the overseers alone. . . The modern office of pastor is an office not known in the New Testament; hence the limit of power which may be claimed to belong to it is not therein laid down.[16]**

E. G. Sewell

Finally, in October of 1892, E. G. Sewell writes about the exceedingly important work of the "edification of the church of

God, the strengthening and training of the members," and "the manner in which this is done:"

> **Many congregations are practicing upon the principle that this work is best and chiefly done by having a regular pastor or preacher to preach to them every Lord's day and night, and to conduct all their public services and prayer-meetings, and such like, and thus interest and teach the members. This unfortunately is one of the ways in which the church never has been and never will be edified. This is what might be called the nursery plan of edification. . . . But Christianity is decidedly a working institution, one in which all the members are to be workers in some department or other. And work, nothing but work, will edify, will train and build up the members and make them useful in the Lord's vineyard.**[17]

Isaac Errett

In April of 1885, Isaac Errett, editor of the *Christian Standard*, **published a proposition suggesting that, while the pastor system is not what the scriptures contemplate, the condition of the churches of that day rendered it a justifiable and necessary means to an end— but a temporary means, not one that should be accepted as a finality. Errett explains:**

> **Let it be understood that, in the imperfect condition of many of the churches, the employment of one man as preacher and teacher and co-operator with the elders in ruling, is justifiable as a** *necessity*, **but is not to be accepted as a finality.**
>
> **It should be the aim and ambition of all of the churches to reach a more complete organization of forces, such as the Scriptures contemplate, namely: a plurality of elders or bishops whose business it shall be to teach and preach and rule— dividing this labor among themselves as may best sustain the interests of the church, and**

compensated for their services according to the time given to these duties and also, according to their necessities. Such an eldership we have seldom had in any of our churches. . . . We repeat our conviction— based on a large acquaintance with our churches in all parts of the land— that "the churches that employ pastors are churches where the elders either cannot or will not feed the flock." [18]

David Lipscomb

In an editorial response to Errett, David Lipscomb wrote in the *Gospel Advocate***:**

> **The appointments and facilities for self-edification . . . are certainly better now than in the early church. But Elder Errett decides that certain things are necessary to the development of the church now that God did not think necessary for it even under more unfavorable circumstances than the present! What is this but sitting in judgment on God's appointments, pronouncing them insufficient for the ends for which he ordained them? Can man be guilty of higher presumption than this? . . . Elder Errett believes God's order is one thing, but he finds a necessity for teaching and practicing something different from God's order. When our brethren hereafter condemn the** *Advocate* **and Bro. Harding for these teachings, let them remember that Elder Errett and the** *Standard* **declare they are scriptural, and constitute the true Divine order, and he teaches and preaches another way only because he thinks an emergency has arisen for which God did not provide and he has found a more practical way and one better suited to the present condition of the churches and of society, than God's order.**[19]

James A. Harding

In the same issue of the *Advocate*, James A. Harding also responds to Errett's proposal, specifically, to his assertion that "the churches that employ pastors are churches where the elders either cannot or will not feed the flock." Harding writes:

> **. . . I can testify from my own observation that a good eldership will lose its efficiency, and its members become both unable and unwilling to do the work of elders, in a very few years after the employment of a pastor. And if under the pastor system a good eldership has ever been developed, I have never seen, or heard of the case. I don't believe that it ever has, or ever will be done.**
>
> **But I have known churches that would not have a pastor, because they were determined to go by the word of God, believing that in it we have "all things that pertain unto life and godliness,". . .**
>
> **"The pastor" is not a necessity. He is a fungus growth upon the church, the body of Christians, dwarfing it growth, preventing the development of its members; and until the church gets rid of him it will never prosper as it should. In the Bible we can find all the "necessities."**[20]

Carroll Kendrick

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, in his *Live Religious Issues of the Day: Rules and Principles for Bible Study*, Carroll Kendrick wrote:

> **The present popular one man pastor hired from abroad "to preach to the church," is an addition to that organization of the church provided by Jesus Christ; and those who make and those who tolerate, aid and abet this addition, must share in the plagues denounced against those who add to the word of God. To *add an officer* to those scripturally authorized for the teaching, shepherding and governing of the church, is as impious as to *take away***

the officers scripturally appointed for these ends! And these clergy pastors practically do both.[21]

Later in the book, Kendrick states:

> **The members must learn to come together to worship, and to teach and study God's word— not to have their ears tickled by a pretty speech, from which little of importance can be learned. We must learn "the ancient order" better than to meet to be preached to after the past or present clergy style. Meet socially; worship, teach, read, learn, exhort one another, etc. Let each congregation be one grand Bible class, with Bibles open, with lessons announced on the previous Lord's day, and carefully studied during the week. Let each go with some question, some idea for the general good, etc. 1 Cor. xiv: 26. And as certain as God's way is wiser than man's way, will we soon see wherein we have been wrong, and what is the divinely chosen way to the best success. The disciples will study, and learn the holy Scriptures, as in the beginning of this reformation, and as they never will do under the modern one-man pastor.[22].**

David Lipscomb

Finally, in 1916, David Lipscomb published a booklet titled *Christian Unity: How Promoted, How Destroyed: Faith and Opinion***, in which he opposed the innovative teachings of his time among the Disciples, referring to them as matters of opinion (rather than matters of faith)— not to be imposed upon others. Among those innovations are "fads and fancies and preferences about suppers and organs and pastors and missionary societies."[23] He writes:**

> **So too, of the pastor as distinct from the elders. It is a matter of opinion with some that it is permissible. Others differ in opinion. Others are of the opinion that such a pastorship is wrong and hurtful to the true interests of the**

church, and subversive of the order of God. . . . All agree the elders as pastors should have the oversight of and teach the congregation. This is a matter of faith— God's word teaches it. The one man hired to act as pastor, has no authority or precedent in the word of God. It is based on opinion. It breeds discord. . . . The introduction of . . . the pastor distinct from the elder . . . is a gross and palpable violation of the principles of union laid down by these worthy men who undertook to unite the religious world on the word of God, and is condemned by them as the fruitful source of corruption and division in the churches of God. . . . The pastor distinct from the eldership, is added as a matter of opinion. This opinion of man becomes equivalent to or above the order of God, which ordains the elders as the teachers. The pastorate becomes more important than the eldership. It degrades the authority that ordains the eldership for the church.[24]

He concludes:

> When a man tests the Bible and its truth or any part of it, by his own judgment or opinion of what is right, instead of these by that, he has rejected it as the word of God, and the rule of faith for man. This is the essence of rationalism; and rationalism is infidelity. The adoption of societies, organs, pastors and festivals or any and every practice based on man's judgment, into the service of God, is a school that leads and trains the mind to rely upon human judgment in religious service and finally to substitute it for the word of God.[25]

Ketcherside and the One-Man Pastor System

Although my father, an independent thinker, did not read Ketcherside until later in life, he had heard about his positions on certain points of doctrine. Regarding the pastor system, he could find no precedent for it in scripture. Years later, after I became familiar with Ketcherside's thinking, I found his views on the pastor system questionable, since I had always,

uncritically, accepted that approach to the edification of the church as biblical.

It was not until much later that I came to recognize Ketcherside was actually aligned with the mainstream of restoration thought and practice, despite the derision of his detractors who had labeled him out of step with the movement. After reading his debates on the pastor system, I became convinced that his position, often dismissed as the ramblings of an eccentric— typically by those who had never read him— was, in fact, rooted in clear, reasonable, and most importantly scriptural arguments.

The following excerpts from Ketcherside's writings on the pastor system, taken from *Macedonian Call*, *Missouri Mission Messenger*, **and** *Mission Messenger*, **are representative of the position he expresses throughout his works.**

Macedonian Call

The writing career of Carl Ketcherside began and developed within the pages of the *Macedonian Call,* **a paper edited by D. Austen Sommer, son of Daniel Sommer. The earliest references to Ketcherside as an author are from 1932 and 1934, when he appeared among the signatories to declarations opposing the "Rough Draft." His first essay, however, "Letters to 'A Faint-Hearted Brother,'" did not appear until February of 1935.**

Ketcherside wrote approximately eighty articles for the *Macedonian Call* **from 1935–46. However, it was not until March of 1940— two months after the death of Daniel Sommer— that he addressed the matter of the pastor system in his essay "Sign Posts Along the Road." The fact that it took five years into his writing career before he wrote about the pastor system might be explained by the fact that it had never been a matter of**

controversy within the community of faith into which he was born. In fact, since the days of Alexander Campbell, it had never been regarded as part of the ancient order of things. It may also be that the timing of his article was influenced by the increased references to the pastor system in the *Macedonian Call* in the years just prior to his article.

Whatever prompted his choice of topic or timing, Ketcherside warns against what he considered to be a deadly concept:

> **There is a lot of false philosophy circulating around over this country. None is more deadly than that species of false reasoning which encourages brethren and churches to drift farther and farther into the control of a one-man preacher-pastor system, ignoring the teaching of God's Book as to the development of a qualified eldership to rule over the local bodies.**
>
> **This is the root of the "kingdom of the clergy;" it is the starting point of internal decay; the beginning of the end for the development and consequent growth of the church along divinely appointed lines. . . . Any system that usurps for one man the prerogatives and responsibilities of the whole Body is wrong and without the stamp of God's approval.[26]**

In the same issue of the paper, under the title "The Kingdom of the Clergy," Editor Sommer announces his intention to publish an article in the May issue titled "A Forgotten Scripture, or, A 'Kingdom of the Clergy' in 'Churches of Christ.'" That article, which spanned six and a half pages, references numerous past leaders of the Restoration Movement who viewed the pastor system as an evil to be avoided. It also argues that seminaries, Bible colleges, and other human religious organizations are not only unscriptural but unnecessary.

Below are subheadings from Sommer's article that reflect

the names of earlier leaders in the movement whose writings he cited in support of his thesis:

- **Warnings Against "The Kingdom of the Clergy"**
- *Alexander Campbell* **Warned Us**
- *Benjamin Franklin* **Lifts Up His Finger**
- *David Lipscomb* **Speaks From the Past**
- *J. A. Harding* **Speaks**
- *F. B. Srygley* **Gets Nervous**
- *J. D. Tant* **Continues to Warn**
- *Foy Wallace, Jr.* **Deplores Disrespect of Elders**
- *H. H. Adamson* **States Facts**
- **A Lutheran Tells Martin Luther's Position**
- *Gilbert O. Nations* **Has Studied the Clergy**
- **"But Paul Was Three Years at Ephesus"**
- **Unscripturalness of Theological Seminaries and Bible Colleges**
- **Church Schools Are Hot-Beds of a Clergy**
- **"Look at the Good We Do"**
- **Human Religious Organizations Are Unnecessary**
- **It Can Be Done**
- **The Only Way Out of This Trouble**
- **Our Troubles—God's Remedy**
- **A Final Appeal to the Reader** [27]

Also appearing in the May 1940 issue, following the article mentioned above, was a declaration by the congregation in Flat River, Missouri— Ketcherside's hometown— titled "Our Position." The article is introduced with the following statement, with italics added to emphasize clauses that may explain Ketcherside's delay in addressing the pastor system until two months prior:

> **We believe that it's about time to speak up and tell brethren how we feel about conditions generally. Brother D. Austen Sommer has been advocating something through the years that a lot of us have acknowledged as**

> **scriptural and right,** *but at the same time have never said much about publicly***. We have followed along employing the methods that he has advocated, not because he taught them, but because we thought the Bible upheld them,** *but thus far we have never presented the matter of our feelings to the brotherhood***.**[28]

When Ketcherside finally addresses the issue of the pastor system more fully, in October of 1941, it seems to be in response to accusations that misrepresented his position— and that of the *Macedonian Call***— in an apparent attempt to arouse prejudice in the minds of non-critical thinkers. Ketcherside observes:**

> **It is apparent that many of the membership of the various congregations are so "taken up" with this or that preacher, that if you can convince them that the Macedonian Call writers are against preaching, it is enough to turn their minds and hearts completely from the truth of the matter, and they thus refuse to hear evidence setting forth our correct stand.**[29]

In his response to the misrepresentation in the October article, Ketcherside first enumerates those things he does *not* **oppose: (1) Preaching, (2) Monthly Preaching, (3) Paying Preachers, (4) All-Time Preaching. However, the caveat to understanding the implications of these items lies in his definition of** *preaching* **as "God's method of converting the world," and** *teaching* **as "God's method of developing the church." Secondly, regarding what he does oppose, Ketcherside states: We are opposed to hiring a man to come into a congregation which has elders in order to do the work God has delegated the bishops."**[30]

Were it argued that the "one-man preacher pastor" is justifiable, so long as he does not assume the authority of the elders, Ketcherside would respond:

> **"We are opposed to hiring a man to come into a congregation which has elders in order to do the work God**

has delegated the bishops. That work is to oversee and feed the flock. No one will deny that. . . . But the same passage of God's Word which says it is the duty of the elders to "oversee" also says it is their duty "to feed." If taking over one of these prerogatives makes a preacher a pastor, why not the taking over of the other? If it's wrong for a preacher to oversee the flock where there are elders, because he assumes the authority of the elders, why is it not wrong for him to do the feeding, seeing that he thereby assumes the work of the elders? What makes it right for him to assume the *work*, but wrong to assume the *authority*?

Those who insinuate that it is our purpose to tell each church how much preaching it shall have, simply falsify. That is not our business. But it is the business of Christ to do so, and he has carefully defined the work of the elders, deacons and preachers. . . . When a church hires a man to feed them and thus discourages its eldership and congregation from proper, scriptural development that church has too much preaching, and I care not where it may be. *Preaching* is God's method of converting the world; *teaching* is God's method of developing the church![31]

Four years passed before Ketcherside addressed the pastor system again.

Missouri Mission Messenger

Ketcherside began publishing his own paper, *Missouri Mission Messenger*, in January of 1940. In July of 1945, in an article titled "Statement on Conviction," he clarified his position on the pastor system:

I do not oppose preaching; and I do not necessarily oppose what is called "monthly preaching!" But I do oppose *mere* monthly preaching. I oppose it because of its

> tendencies. It is the first step toward the pastor system. It is more than that. It is the "pastor system" in its incipiency.[32]

The following month, Ketcherside elaborated on what he meant by "mere monthly preaching," noting that it is "the kind that militates against developing the whole body and all of the soldiers in the army of the Lord."[33]

The February 1946 issue of the paper featured a drawing (likely by Ketcherside himself) with the following caption: "The Bible Colleges, using the modern pastor system to hold the lever will soon pry the church from its foundation into sectarianism."

A little over two years later, in December of 1947, Ketcherside published an article titled "I Believe in a Pastor System," in which he contrasts the biblical pastor system with that of the one-man hireling pastor system.

Mission Messenger

One month after dropping "Missouri" from the name of his paper, in January of 1949, Ketcherside published an article titled "Mutual Ministry." In it, he refers to those who believe in the "one-man ministry" as "modern digressives from the truth of heaven." Of these, he writes:

> They conceive that it is right and proper to hire a man to preach to the church each Lord's Day morning and evening, doing the feeding which is a part and portion of the responsibility of the scriptural pastors, or elders. Under the guise of "evangelists" they settle down with or over a church after having received their degree from some advanced "brotherhood" parochial school, and carry on for hire the task which God has designated for all Christians.[34]

In April of 1949, Ketcherside authored a direct attack on the one-man pastor system, the first since October 1941. In apparent self-defense— against the accusation of being "a modern Don Quixote, jousting at chimerical windmills" and of possessing "Procrustean tendencies" because of his "contention for mutual ministry"— and in response to being challenged to "file specific and unequivocal objections against the practices of the churches under attack," he files three "accusations against the hireling ministerial system in the churches today." (1) It is unscriptural. (2) It is a usurper. (3) It is an unwarranted anomaly.[35]

In response to the claim that the one-man pastor, often referred to as "the minister," is merely "*a* minister"— one among many— Ketcherside cites several church publications in evidence of the fact that the title "*the* minister" was then in current use. Regarding the adoption of the title "located evangelist," Ketcherside observes that simply "calling a hireling pastor an evangelist" does not make him one. He then concludes by pointing out that reverting to a pastor system would undo one of the great accomplishments of the Reformation— the wresting of God's Word "from the supercilious and pretentious ecclesiastics" and making it available to the church, "which is God's clergy."[36]

Three months later, prompted by an advertisement in the *Firm Foundation* **in which an individual is seeking a position with a congregation that is "in order: elders and deacons," Ketcherside comments:**

> **It is useless for me to point out that this clear cut bid to serve as a hireling, in a congregation already possessing scriptural pastors, would have caused hands to go up in holy horror fifty years ago. . . . The modern one-man minister system which sustains and nourishes these churches is as foreign to the apostolic system as is sprinkling for baptism. . . . Here is ecclesiasticism gone to seed! . . . Where is the scripture that authorizes one man**

capturing the speaking platform because of a superior education, or a polished presentation?[37]

In the first issue of his paper for 1950, Ketcherside observes:

> **There is increasing evidence that the sectarian world is awaking to the solemn truth that every child of God is a minister, and the capture of the rights of the spiritual posterity of the Heavenly Father by a group of special clerics and clerical specialists is working its own rebuke. . . . Now there is a silent, but nonetheless effective, revolt against the idea of surrendering the heaven-bestowed rights of ministry and worship, upon those mercenaries who serve for hire. . . . Do not misunderstand me! I do not believe that sectarianism will abandon its clergy-dominated system. But the indications are that there is a growing recognition that the system is useless, fruitless, ineffective and contrary to the Spirit of God's Word. Does it not seem peculiar then, that as sectarianism strives to doff the yoke, that churches of Christ are preparing to don it?[38]**

By August of 1950, the controversy over the one-man pastor system had escalated to the point where Ketcherside called upon to debate the issue. In response, he wrote:

> **I will meet in public discussion the outstanding men of the opposition, and herewith offer to meet upon fair propositions, either N. B. Hardeman, George S. Benson, or G. C. Brewer. I will meet them in either Paragould or the auditorium of Harding College at Searcy. Truth has nothing to fear! If I am proven wrong, I will get right! I have no desire for victory over any man. I have an intense desire to know the truth, for the Book declares that "ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."[39]**

An announcement that Ketcherside's offer to debate the one-man pastor system had been accepted appeared in the February issue of his paper under the title "A Coming

Debate,"[40] By the time the paper reached its readers, Ketcherside was on his way to the British Isles a second time, a trip that would mark the beginning of radical change in his life. At the time of the February announcement, the identity of Ketcherside's opponent had not yet been decided, but, in all likelihood, it would be G. K. Wallace.

Seven months later, Ketcherside wrote: "Brother Wallace and I signed propositions for a debate on the preacher-pastor system, colleges, and evangelistic oversight in congregations newly established."[41] The debate was scheduled for June 30–July 4, of the following year. Although Ketcherside was aware that his thinking was undergoing transformation, he had little idea at the time of where that process would lead. However, it would not result in a change in his understanding of scripture relative to the manner in which the church was to be edified.

Following the debate with Wallace in 1952, Ketcherside participated in two additional debates on similar propositions during the latter part of 1953— one in October with Wallace in St. Louis, and another in December with Flavil Colley in Dallas. The debate with Colley appears to have been his final debate on the pastor system.[42]

The January 1955 issue of *Mission Messenger* was labeled: "Special Issue: Dealing with the introduction among the churches of Christ of a clergy caste operating under the guise of 'located evangelists.'" All articles that month focused exclusively on this theme. According to Ketcherside's personal correspondence, this special issue appears to have been prompted by a similar edition of *Bible Talk*, edited by Leroy Garrett, published in March of 1954.[43]

Writing in 1957, Ketcherside warns:

> **The clergy system will be the hardest of all innovations to overthrow. Those who are a part of it will fight to the end to retain its prestige, power and pelf. It**

appeals to the indolent, slothful and indifferent membership. They would rather pay someone to study, preach and teach for them than to do these things. But *there can never be a full restoration of God's plan so long as we retain the one man pastor system***. Here is the real test! You can never restore a thing by adding something that was not in the original.**[44]

Later that year, he poses the following question:

> **We are prompted to ask what there is for an imported hireling to do in a flock that has scriptural shepherds or bishops? He must either serve as a sheep or a shepherd! . . . We are bold enough to affirm that the presence of "the located evangelist" in a congregation with elders is a living proof of an unconverted membership, an unqualified presbytery— or both! We challenge those who champion this hireling clergy system to put a finger on one thing that the "local minister" is to do in a properly organized congregation. He is a functionary without a function, a parasite and a fungus growth upon the body of the Christ!**[45]

From 1950 to 1974, Ketcherside published approximately forty-four articles in *Mission Messenger* **addressing the one-man pastor system at length. Several of these, noted for the insights they offer, are listed under "For Additional Study." However, in none of them does he express a viewpoint substantially different from that in his earlier essays, except that after 1957,** *he no longer considered the issue to be a condition for Christian fellowship***.**

For Additional Study

The following is a list of articles by W. Carl Ketcherside that discuss the topic of the current chapter in greater detail. All of Ketcherside's essays are available in volumes 1 and 3 of the *e-book* series *The Works of W. Carl Ketcherside*, accessible on Amazon.com and archive.org.

- **"Straws in the Wind."** *Mission Messenger* **(January 1950): 11.**
- **"Reply to John Allen Hudson."** *Mission Messenger* **(February 1950): 7.**
- **"The One-Man Pastor System."** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1950): 1.**
- **"The Ministry Question."** *Mission Messenger* **(November 1950): 6.**
- **"The Hireling Ministry."** *Mission Messenger* **(December 1950): 4.**
- **"The Present Conflict."** *Mission Messenger* **(February 1951): 8.**
- **"Professional Ministers."** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1952): 6.**
- **"Where Can He Find It?"** *Mission Messenger* **(June 1952): 11.**
- **"Racketeers in Religion."** *Mission Messenger* **(January 1953): 7.**
- **"A Clergy Incubator."** *Mission Messenger* **(February 1953): 6.**
- **"What About Harding College?"** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1953): 4.**
- **"Another Debate with Wallace."** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1953): 8.**
- **"Free Trial Bottle."** *Mission Messenger* **(May 1953): 11.**
- **"Gospel Peddlers."** *Mission Messenger* **(May 1953): 12.**
- **"Was God Mistaken?"** *Mission Messenger* **(December 1953): 6.**
- **"Sunday School Cards."** *Mission Messenger* **(June 1954): 5.**

- **"The Man from Dallas."** *Mission Messenger* **(August 1954): 1.**
- **"Kingdom of the Clergy."** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1954): 1.**
- **"The Hireling Clergy System Must Go."** *Mission Messenger* **(January 1955): 2.**
- **"The Eternal Triangle."** *Mission Messenger* **(January 1955): 3.**
- **"Objections to One Man Ministry."** *Mission Messenger* **(January 1955): 9.**
- **"Tactics of the Clergy."** *Mission Messenger* **(January 1955): 23.**
- **"One Thing Thou Lackest."** *Mission Messenger* **(January 1955): 26.**
- **"The Green Pasture."** *Mission Messenger* **(April 1955): 9.**
- **"A Clash of Systems."** *Mission Messenger* **(August 1955): 1.**
- **"The Drift of Time."** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1955): 1.**
- **"Reaching the Lost."** *Mission Messenger* **(November 1955): 1.**
- **"Mutual Ministry."** *Mission Messenger* **(November 1955): 9.**
- **"Christian Colleges and Clergymen."** *Mission Messenger* **(December 1955): 2.**
- **"Every Man."** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1956): 7.**
- **"Teachers of Others."** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1956): 13.**
- **"The Suez Dispute."** *Mission Messenger* **(October 1956): 12.**
- **"The Clergy and the Church."** *Mission Messenger* **(April 1957): 3.**
- **"A Sad Commentary."** *Mission Messenger* **(July 1957): 9.**
- **"Big Preachers."** *Mission Messenger* **(January 1958): 13.**
- **"The Road to Ruin."** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1958): 1.**
- **"Church of Christ Party."** *Mission Messenger* **(December 1959): 1.**
- **"Clergy and Laity."** *Mission Messenger* **(January 1960): 13.**

- **"The Clergy of God."** *Mission Messenger* **(October 1967): 45.**
- **"Ministry and Ministers."** *Mission Messenger* **(October 1969): 150.**
- **"The Clergy System."** *Mission Messenger* **(February 1974): 17.**
- **"Transforming Speech."** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1974): 33.**
- **"The Changing Scene."** *Mission Messenger* **(April 1974): 49.**
- **"Pastoral Flypaper."** *Mission Messenger* **(May 1974): 65.**

Chapter 5

GOSPEL AND DOCTRINE

Main Menu

- Introduction
- Historical Development
- Ketcherside on Gospel and Doctrine
- Implications for Christian Unity
- An Anecdote
- For Additional Study

Introduction

Since the days of Alexander Campbell, leaders of the Stone-Campbell restoration movement have recognized the difference between the acts of *preaching* and *teaching* and the audiences for which each is intended. In the 1950s, Carl Ketcherside began to call attention to this difference, observing that the *gospel* is to be preached to the world, and the apostles' *doctrine*, to be taught to the church.

By the 1960s, he had begun to insist that the words "gospel" and "doctrine," as used in the new covenant scriptures, reflect distinct *content*. It seems likely that he was the first heir of the Stone-Campbell tradition to call attention to this distinction. In any event, he appears, at least, to be the first to be derided for his position by the mainline brotherhood.

Ketcherside's later interest in preserving the scriptural distinction between *gospel* and *doctrine* was specifically related to his effort to bring about visible unity among the heirs of the movement. Failure to recognize this difference had led to the conclusion that doctrinal beliefs conflicting with those held by the majority were to be anathematized as "another gospel" (Galatians 1:8, 9). This approach to unity through coerced conformity had produced the same kind of division among the heirs of the Stone-Campbell unity movement that existed among the Protestants of Campbell's day.

By the time Ketcherside reached the conclusion that the unity of the body of Christ is not based on doctrinal understanding (*see* Chapter 9), he had exhaustively examined the proof texts used to justify division over doctrinal differences.[1] By substituting the word "doctrine" for "gospel," any difference in one's understanding of scripture could be characterized by one's opponent as constituting "another gospel." The perpetrator could then be accused of perverting the *gospel* or preaching a *gospel* contrary to what had been received

(Galatians 1:8, 9), and condemned as those who "obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thessalonians 1:8). Among those upon whom such condemnation came to be assigned were those who endorsed Sunday schools, multiple cups, the one-man pastor system, the church support of orphan homes, instrumental music, missionary societies, and other similar practices.

Ketcherside would conclude that the use of the word "gospel" to include everything contained in the new covenant scriptures amounts to a *twisting* of the scriptures, resulting in needless division within the body. Such division, he contends, arose from a failure to maintain that "pure speech" about which Campbell had frequently admonished.

Historical Development

It was the position of the majority of Ketcherside's nineteenth-century predecessors that *preaching* was to be directed to the unbeliever, whereas *teaching* was for believers. One of the earliest statements to this effect in the Stone-Campbell literature was made in 1845 by Thomas Campbell:

> **In the mean time, however, we should carefully advert to the plain systematic distinction between preaching and teaching; the former being intended for the conversion of sinners; the latter for the comfort and edification of saints, as above suggested.[2]**

In 1853, Alexander Campbell wrote:

> **Preaching the gospel and teaching the converts, are as distinct and distinguishable employments as enlisting an army and training it, or as creating a school and teaching it. Unhappily for the church and for the world, this distinction, if at all conceded as legitimate, is obliterated or annulled in almost all Protestant Christendom. . . . These men [Doctors of Divinity], at least many of them, with all**

"their blushing honors thick upon them," seem to have never learned the difference between *preaching* and *teaching* Christ— his person, mission, and work. Yet we are informed that his Apostles, "daily in the temple, and from house to house, ceased not to *teach* and *preach* Jesus Christ." They *preached* Christ to the world, and they *taught* his gospel and its institutions to the churches which they had gathered, or to the households they had converted.[3]

In 1856, in the second installment of Robert Richardson's series on "Christian Doctrine," he observed, regarding the Lord's final commission to his apostles:

This commission, as fully detailed, resolves itself into two parts. The first has respect to converting; the second, to teaching the converted. Conversion or discipleship was to be effected by *preaching* the gospel. Christian progress and perfection were to be attained by *teaching*. In the first, Christ was *preached,* in the second, Christ was *taught.* Hence we are told that the apostles, "daily in the temple and in every house, ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." They did not attempt to convert men by *teaching;* neither did they labor to perfect the disciples by *preaching.* Preaching was for *sinners;* teaching was for *saints,* and the distinction thus made in the very commission itself, is sufficient to show that nothing like modern indoctrination, in order to faith, was ever contemplated in primitive Christianity.[4]

Late in 1857, Alexander Campbell lamented:

The difference between *preaching* and *teaching* Christ, so palpable in the apostolic age, though now confounded in the theoretic theologies of Denominational Christianities, must be well defined and clearly distinguished in the mind, in the style; and utterances of an evangelist, . . . he must properly and fully understand the whole oracles of God, and clearly distinguish the difference between preaching and teaching Jesus Christ.[5]

The following month, Robert Richardson observed cogently:

> **But now, losing sight entirely of the difference between *preaching* and *teaching* Christ— making no distinction between the simple elements of the gospel as they are to be presented to sinners, and those "deep things of God" into which saints "desire to look," the "*brethren*" are admonished to have "nothing to do with teaching which they cannot understand."[6]**

Five years later, in 1862, Alexander Campbell remarked:

> **We *preach*, or report, or proclaim news. But who *teaches* news!! Who exhorts news!! *We preach* the gospel to unbelievers, to aliens, but never to Christians, or those who have received it.[7]**

In early 1883, James A. Harding wrote:

> **Bro. Allen says: 'We find that the New Testament churches were not without preaching, both by elders and evangelists.' The statement is true enough, if we substitute the word teaching for preaching. It is not proper to talk about "preaching to churches"; *preaching is for the world, teaching for the church.* The misuse of the word was probably brought about by the incorrect translation of Acts 20:7, and by the custom of having preachers to become pastors. It is true that in apostolic times, evangelists organized churches and kept an oversight over them, till overseers were developed among them. It is also true that these overseers then took the oversight and became the teachers of the flock.[8]**

In the same article, Harding cautioned that the word "pastor" "is rapidly growing in favor among the leaders in this restoration."[9]

Just over a year later, Harding wrote:

> **Just here, in order that what follows may be understood, I desire to call attention to the difference between preaching and teaching. The commands of the commission to the preacher stands thus: (1) Go; (2) Preach the gospel; (3) Baptize penitent believers; (4) Teach the disciples to observe all things that Jesus has commanded. . . . From this order it is evident that** *preaching is for the world, teaching for the church***. To preach is to tell of the life, suffering, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, and to show how there is in all this, good news for the sinners.**[10]

In 1890, Dr. Carroll Kendrick, author of *Live Religious Issues of the Day: Rules and Principles for Bible Study***, wrote in the** *Gospel Advocate* **that there are six things "now so troubling the churches and corrupting the worship of the saints." Third on his list is:**

> **The one man hired pastor in and over the church and its scriptural bishops and deacons, including his textuary sermonizing style,** *preaching* **to the** *church* **instead of the world— and instead of** *teaching* **the disciples the Bible.** [11]

Nearly two decades later, in 1909, J. C. McQuiddy wrote:

> **There is a distinction in the New Testament between preaching and teaching. John the Baptist is always represented as** *preaching***, never as** *teaching***. But Jesus is represented as a teacher of truth in addition to his mission as a preacher of righteousness. Again, when our Lord had entered upon his public ministry, he is spoken of again and again as** *teaching* **in the synagogues, as distinct from his preaching there. . . . Every great reform in the church has been brought about by preaching. But the religious training and development of any people has been attained, and the results of any reformation have been made permanent, only through a process of interlocutory, or catechetical, teaching. . . .**[12]

One notable exception to the thinking of nineteenth-

century churches is found in David Lipscomb, editor of the *Gospel Advocate* from 1866 until his death in 1917. In an article by W. J. Rice, addressed to "Brother Lipscomb" regarding the pattern of worship, the author admonishes Lipscomb for failing to maintain— as he had in the past— the distinction between preaching and teaching. Lipscomb responded:

> **Brother Rice thinks because I have not examined the subject [Acts 2:42 as a pattern for the order of worship] I do not observe the distinction between teaching and preaching that he does. He mistakes the reason.** *For twenty years I carefully observed the distinction;* **I then carefully examined it, and because I did this, I am not so careful to keep up the distinction. I find the Scriptures do not keep it up. . . .**[13]

In his 1910 publication, *Queries and Answers*, **Lipscomb responds to the question: What is the work of an evangelist?**

> **The work of the evangelist is to evangelize. That means to make known the gospel. This includes all the teaching needed to make that gospel effective in the salvation of men. There was originally a distinction in the meanings of the words** *preach*, *evangelize*, **and** *teach*. **But the same person was called to all to such an extent that the words greatly lost their distinction and are used almost indiscriminately to refer to all the preaching and teaching needed to save men.**[14]

Three years later, Lipscomb writes in the *Advocate*:

> **A preacher is one who first comes with a message of good news to man. To repeat it is to teach, not to preach.** *We confound the terms so as to make all teaching preaching. . . .* **We do not keep the distinction between teaching and preaching clear, and it is not always done in the Bible.**[15]

In the above, Lipscomb does not fail to recognize that the message shared with the unbeliever differs from that shared

with the saints, observing that sharing the message of the gospel with believers, in his own words, is to "*teach, not to preach*." Furthermore, Lipscomb acknowledges the confusion created by "making all teaching preaching." In any event, most Restoration churches throughout the nineteenth century opposed the pastor system, with their opposition rooted in a recognition of the fundamental distinction between preaching and teaching, and the corresponding roles of those tasked with each.

Ketcherside on Gospel and Doctrine

From his youth, Carl Ketcherside had been nurtured by a community of faith that practiced what was commonly referred to as "mutual ministry." According to this approach to the edification of the church, no single individual was designated to address the assembled church exclusively on a regular basis. Rather, all who had the ability to share a word of edification with the congregation were encouraged to do so, including the elders, who supervised both the conduct of all members and the content of what was shared. The precedent for how the church should conduct itself— "when you come together as a church" (1 Corinthians 11:18)— was found in the use of the gifts given to each member for the purpose of building up the body (as outlined in Romans 12:4–8)— for mutual edification.[16]

In his formative years, Ketcherside was openly opposed to "hiring a man to come into a congregation which has elders, in order to do the work God has delegated the bishops."[17] Although he had not yet fully discriminated between the words "preacher" and "teacher," he did make a clear distinction between the two functions. Writing in 1941, he states:

> ***Preaching* is God's method of converting the world;**
> ***teaching* is God's method of developing the church![18]**

Earlier that same year, D. A. Sommer expressed a similar sentiment:

> **Again I say: Take an unabridged concordance and look up the word "preach", and** *you will not find a single instance where the preachers "preached" to believers in the Christian religion; they preached to non-believers, and TAUGHT the believers*.[19]

The next time Ketcherside addressed this topic was in 1948, in his own journal, where he commented on an article by Vernon Hurst:[20] Ketcherside writes:

> **That interesting analysis on "Preaching and Teaching," by Vernon Hurst, will be concluded next month. You may not realize it, but nothing of weightier importance has been published in this journal in many moons. If you didn't read the first article carefully, go back and read it in this issue. There's plenty of interest going to be yours in the next paper![21]**

While Hurst clearly distinguishes between "preaching" (to the unsaved) and "teaching" (the church), he never uses the words "gospel" or "doctrine."

In July of 1949, Ketcherside wrote for the first time in his own journal about the difference between preaching and teaching, in an article titled "Radiant Truth Reviewed." However, he does not yet make a specific distinction between the "gospel" and "doctrine."

> **Paul "taught every where in every church" (1 Cor. 4:17); he exhorted, comforted and charged them (1 Thess. 2:11); he besought and admonished them (1 Thess. 5:12); he praised or commended them (1 Cor. 11:2); he reminded them of the gospel which he had preached (1 Cor. 15:1), but he did not preach in the church.[22]**

In 1952, Ketcherside drew attention to the distinct audiences for whom the gospel and doctrine were intended. In his essay, "Where Can He Find It?" he writes:

But just to make this even more interesting, I wish to inform Bro. Dunn that there is not only no scripture for hiring a man to preach a "trial sermon" to the church, but there is no record of any apostle or evangelist ever preaching a gospel sermon to the church. Preaching the *gospel* was for the world, teaching the apostles' *doctrine* was for the church! The first is the work of evangelists; the second that of pastors.[23]

The following month, in his "Cow Pasture Debate" with G. K. Wallace, near Paragould, Arkansas, Ketcherside introduced his audience to the difference between preaching and teaching:

My friends, there is a great difference between preaching and teaching. Our brother has repeatedly spoken about preaching to the church. I want you to know that you cannot preach the gospel to the church and here is a good place for us to center this discussion. Let my good brother Wallace put his finger on that passage in the New Testament scriptures where it indicates that anyone ever preached a gospel sermon to the church. Let him put his finger on the place. Let him bring just one such passage of scripture and he can close this debate tonight if he will do it.[24]

In his second affirmative, Wallace responds to Ketcherside with a mocking challenge:

I wish you would demonstrate for us how to preach and how to teach. When you get up here will you use the first five minutes to teach and the next five to preach? (Laughter from audience). Will you demonstrate for us when you get up here tonight? I'm going to show you something, in a minute, just how silly that is. But you get up here tonight and the first five minutes preach and the next five minutes just teach. Just show us. Demonstrate, that's all we ask. Just demonstrate the difference. You make a big play by saying that preach and teach are two different things. You get up here and preach five minutes and then teach five. Let us see you demonstrate? Will

you?"[25]

Again, in his fourth affirmative, Wallace continues his taunts:

> **Now, my brethren can't figure out what you mean, so will you teach five minutes and preach five minutes tonight for us? Show us how to do it. So when these brethren go back they can be loyal. Show us how to do it. Stand up here tonight and teach five minutes and preach five minutes. Show us just how to do it.** *Show* **us tonight, brother Ketcherside, when you get up here— just demonstrate. Don't tell anybody now when you're fixing to do it. Just let us watch. See if we can tell when you shift gears. Just get up here and start! Let us see! That is the thing over which he builds a hobby!"**[26]

But nowhere in the debate does Ketcherside contrast the *content* **of the gospel with that of doctrine.**

The following year, in his debate with Flavil Colley in Dallas, Texas, Ketcherside twice emphasizes the distinction between the respective content of gospel— the thing *preached to unbelievers***— and apostolic doctrine— the thing** *taught to believers***. The first mention occurs in his first negative:**

> **"Is the preaching of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the teaching of the apostles' doctrine one and the same thing? The entire scholarship of the world in dealing with the Greek terms is opposed to my brother."**[27]

The second mention occurs in his fourth negative:

> **The gospel was the thing preached to produce faith. After a man had faith, and had accepted the gospel which produced it, he was then taught the** *didache***— the apostles' doctrine.**[28]

In his second debate with Wallace, in 1954, Ketcherside refers to the "distinctive difference between teaching and

preaching, and *the allied subject-matter related to it.*"[29] **In this context, he quotes from Moses E. Lard's** *Commentary on Romans*, **where Lard observes:**

> **It [Acts 20:7] did not include preaching the gospel to those without. This was the work more particularly of the prophet. The** *didaskalia* **was for members of the church, and had for its object their complete enlightenment in duty. It bore the same relation to those within the church, that preaching did to those without. The design of preaching was to bring men in; the design of teaching, to perfect them when in. Teaching was the work chiefly of the overseers of the congregation.**[30]

However, this is as close as Ketcherside comes in his 1950s debates and journal articles to making the distinction between gospel and doctrine for which he would later become controversial.[31]

In February of 1957, during a recorded interview, Ketcherside makes the distinction between "gospel" and "doctrine" for what appears to be the first time. When asked about specific ideas which he considered more important for effectuating the restoration, he responds:

> **We need to recapture the original distinctions between such terms as gospel and doctrine, preaching and teaching. We need to batter down unscriptural distinctions in such terms as minister and communion.**[32]

Then, in March of 1962, while noting that factionalism is merely a demonstration of the spirit that motivates us— people who follow the leading of the Spirit of God simply cannot, by the Spirit, divide or separate themselves into parties— he observes:

> **Like all who trust in legalism we even searched through the scriptures** *confusing gospel and doctrine*, **and marked out our own little distinctive trail.**[33]

However, in August of that year, he explicitly defines the need to distinguish between gospel and doctrine as he asks:

> **Why do we, of all people, fail to see the difference between preaching and teaching or** *gospel and doctrine***? Why do we plod along demanding unity upon the basis of doctrinal conformity when we do not agree upon its implications among ourselves?** *Why do we make the word "gospel" cover every word of the new covenant scriptures and conclude that a man who does not share our explanation of Revelation 20 has not "obeyed the gospel"***? Why do we brand and stigmatize every opinion with reference to some point in the epistolary writings as "another gospel"? Our lack of real scholarship is astounding in view of the claim that we alone are right in our interpretation of the sacred writings.**[34]

Although Ketcherside had not explicitly distinguished the *content* **of preaching from that of teaching prior to this time, he was not unaware of the distinction. In fact, in retrospect, such a distinction seems to have been beneficial in his debates. However, his thinking now appears to be more focused on how this distinction relates to restoring unity to the Restoration fellowship.**

While his earlier distinction between preaching and teaching highlighted the different functions within the body of believers, he is now concerned that anathemas against those who preach "another gospel" should not be applied to those who hold differing interpretations of scripture addressed to Christians. The gospel, as he will demonstrate, is what enables one to become a child of God. Doctrine is what nourishes that child.

This same concept is repeated three months later:

> **Another distinction which needs to be again established is that relating to gospel and doctrine. The gospel is the Good News concerning Jesus. It is to be proclaimed to aliens to enroll them as citizens. It must be**

> **believed to come into relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is that by which we are saved if we keep it in memory. Upon it there can be no difference. It consists of facts to which credible witnesses give testimony. One either believes their testimony or he does not. But the doctrine is the course of instruction for students in the school of Christ! There will be varied degrees of advancement and proficiency in it as in every curriculum demanding acquisition of knowledge. Much of our present difficulty lies in a confusion of these two terms.[35]**

In August of 1963, after quoting from Thomas Campbell's *Declaration and Address*, **Ketcherside states a conclusion he will repeat dozens of times in the years to come. He urges:**

> **Study carefully the expression "terms of communion" and "after progressive edification of the church." The contrast is vital and valid. It is the contrast between gospel and doctrine. The "terms of communion" are equated with "the church's confession," i.e., those things which are conditions of salvation, the things bound upon one in obedience to the gospel. What Thomas Campbell was saying was simply that** *we have no right to make anything a test of fellowship which God has not made a condition of salvation*. **. . . Since God has not made the arrival at a certain degree of doctrinal knowledge a condition of salvation, we have no right to make it a test of fellowship.[36]**

It was another sixteen months before Ketcherside again made referenced the distinction between gospel and doctrine in his 1965 essay, "Another Gospel." Here, he once more addresses the unique content of *gospel* **and** *doctrine* **as he examines how Galatians 1:6-8 has been distorted to justify schism and division among God's children. He argues that the one who Paul indicts as accursed is not a brother who simply differs in his understanding of scripture from others in the congregation. Rather, it is someone who so distorts the gospel message that salvation becomes contingent upon human effort rather than**

upon the free gift of God. He explains:

> **Even the Galatians, troubled as they were by some who wanted to pervert the gospel of Christ, were far from perfect. They were below the standard which Paul desired them to obtain. They had come into Christ but Christ had not yet been formed in them. Yet they were his "little children" as evidenced in his words, "My little children, with whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you" (4:19). He did not accuse them of preaching "another gospel" because they had not matured. Paul knew the difference between the seed from which life came and the daily bread upon which the children fed. He knew the difference between gospel and doctrine, and between faith and knowledge. He knew that the *gospel* brought us into being while the *doctrine* was essential to our growth and well-being and he did not make a test of fellowship out of spiritual digestion.[37]**

Ketcherside goes on to show how those who mistake unity for conformity and predicate fellowship upon endorsement brand every interpretation divergent from their own as "another gospel." He further explains that freedom from error is not a condition for salvation; if it were, all would be damned. Believers in the apostles' days were in error on many points, but they were not charged with "preaching another gospel." No honest opinion held by one who is in Christ and who respects his lordship is "another gospel." To make one's standing with God depend not upon surrender to Jesus, but upon agreeing with certain interpretations, is dangerously close to perverting the gospel.

The following month, Ketcherside's lead article in *Mission Messenger*, titled "Gospel and Doctrine," argues that the words of Jesus in Mark 16:15–16 had become one of the "twisted scriptures" used to divide the church, due to a loss of the scriptural distinction between gospel and doctrine. He states:

> **There is as much difference between the gospel of**

Christ and the apostolic doctrine as there is between the sperm from which a child is begotten and the food which he eats after he is born. The purpose of the gospel is to enlist men in the army of Christ; the doctrine constitutes a manual of arms and book of discipline to develop the soldiers into a fighting force. The first is an announcement that the school of Christ has been opened and eligible scholars will be accepted for enrollment; the latter is the curriculum for daily study by the students, or disciples.

Before we deal with the scriptural connotation involved let us understand why the traditional interpretation is conducive to division and destructive of unity. The common fallacy assumes that all of the apostolic epistles are part of the gospel of Christ and any exposition of the doctrine contrained in these letters is preaching the gospel. Since Jesus makes salvation contingent upon believing the gospel, and superficial students generally confuse belief with knowledge, it is further assumed that those who do not subscribe to the orthodox interpretation placed upon every passage "reject the gospel." Each sect, party or faction, thus makes its traditional explanations and deductions "the gospel" and we end up with as many "gospels" as we have parties.[38]

Two years before ceasing publication of *Mission Messenger*, **in December of 1975, Ketcherside published another essay titled "Gospel and Doctrine," the same title as his 1965 essay. In this 1975 essay, Ketcherside likely makes the clearest statement of his position regarding the difference between gospel and doctrine. He reasons:**

If the gospel includes the whole of the new covenant scriptures then one cannot be saved until he hears and obeys every requirement of every letter. If not, he will be saved by a partial gospel. This will remove salvation from the realm of faith in the person and identity of God's Son and transfer it to the domain of knowledge of didactical and abstract truths. But all human knowledge is relative and no one can ever be sure that his comprehension has

> **embraced all that is essential to his salvation, and there must ever be the haunting fear that he may have overlooked one fact essential to his salvation.[39]**

In this same article, his responses to critical questions about his position further clarify his views.

Although Ketcherside quotes from various sources in support of his understanding of gospel and doctrine, none seems to carry greater weight than that of C. H. Dodd in his 1950 Bampton Lecture, "Gospel and Law: The Relation of Faith and Ethics in Early Christianity," delivered at Columbia University. In this lecture, he states:

> **The form and content of the proclamation, the *kerygma*, can be recovered from the New Testament with reasonable accuracy. It recounted in brief the life and work of Jesus Christ, His conflicts, sufferings, and death, and His resurrection from the dead; and it went on to declare that in these events the divinely guided history of Israel through long centuries had reached its climax. God Himself had acted decisively in this way to inaugurate His kingdom upon earth. This was the core of all early Christian preaching, however it might be elaborated, illustrated, and explained. . . . This order of approach, first the proclamation, then the beginning of instruction in morals, first *kerygma*, then *didaché*, seems to have been thoroughly characteristic of the Christian mission; it is precisely this order, first *kerygma*, then *didaché*, which we have seen to be general in the New Testament writings.[40]**

Implications for Christian Unity

As Ketcherside points out in several essays, if the words *gospel* and *doctrine* are regarded as synonymous, one must determine whether all New Testament teaching or only specific doctrines are required for fellowship. In fact, those who oppose Ketcherside's distinction between gospel and doctrine do not

consistently use the terms synonymously. They invariably distinguish between "obeying the gospel" and believing correct doctrine. It is only when they seek scriptural grounds to censure those who differ with them on non-negotiable doctrines that they apply Paul's condemnation of those who preach "another gospel."

Since the days of the Campbells and throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, Restoration churches were distinguished for their tolerance of doctrinal differences within their number— Thomas Campbell was an avowed Calvinist! This tolerance for differing interpretations of scripture was central to Campbell's unity proposal. It is clearly demonstrated in two of the thirteen propositions set forth in his *Declaration and Address***:**

> **7. That although doctrinal exhibitions of the great system of Divine truths, and defensive testimonies in opposition to prevailing errors, be highly expedient, and the more full and explicit they be for those purposes, the better; yet, as these must be in a great measure the effect of human reasoning, and of course must contain many inferential truths, they ought not to be made terms of Christian communion; unless we suppose, what is contrary to fact, that none have a right to the communion of the Church from the beginning did, and ever will, consist of little children and young men, as well as fathers.**
>
> **8. That as it is not necessary that persons should have a particular knowledge or distinct apprehension of all Divinely revealed truths in order to entitle them to a place in the Church; neither should they, for this purpose, be required to make a profession more extensive than their knowledge; but that, on the contrary, their having a due measure of Scriptural self-knowledge respecting their lost and perishing condition by nature and practice, and of the way of salvation through Jesus Christ, accompanied with a profession of their faith in and obedience to him, in all things, according to his word, is all that is absolutely**

necessary to qualify them for admission into his Church.[41]

Some 27 years later, Alexander Campbell also acknowledged the challenges posed by differences in doctrinal understanding when he wrote:

> **Amongst christians there is now, as there was at the beginning, a very great diversity in the knowledge of the christian institution. There are babes, children, young men, and fathers in Christ now, as well as in the days of the Apostle John. This, from the natural gifts of God, from the diversities of age, education, and circumstances, is unavoidable. And would it not be just as rational and as scriptural to excommunicate one another, because our knowledge is less or greater than any fixed measure, as for differences of opinion or matters of speculation?**[42]

By "gospel," Ketcherside meant "the Message to lead men to believe in Jesus as the Son of God." In contrast, he described "doctrine" as "a course of instruction for the training, development and growth of the children of God."[43]

An Anecdote

In the final issue of *Mission Messenger*, published in December 1975, Carl Ketcherside shared the following quote from Alexander Campbell:

> **There was teaching, there was praying, there was exhortation in the Christian church, but preaching in the church, or to the church, is not once named in the Christian scriptures . . . We preach, or report, or proclaim news! But who teaches news? Who exhorts news? We preach the gospel to unbelievers, to aliens, but never to Christians, or to those who have received it.**[44]

He then follows with an anecdote:

> **An interesting thing happened once when I was in**

Ohio. Some four or five preachers representing a certain faction came to attend an open forum in which I was fielding questions from the audience and to throw it into confusion if possible. In reply to a certain question about gospel and doctrine I read the quotation I have just given from Campbell, without identifying the source. One of the preachers asked if he could speak for just three minutes. When I gave him permission to do so he arose and pointed a finger at me and warned the audience that I was the most dangerous heretic alive today. He said that there was no difference between gospel and doctrine, or between preaching and teaching, and that this was a new idea I had pulled out of a hat. He went on to say that no one ever dreamed up this distinction before I came up with it, and that they would do well to put their trust in the truth the brethren had held through the years rather than in these newly-invented ideas. It was obvious that he was wholly ignorant of the very basis upon which the restoration movement began. When I arose and said the statement was a verbatim quotation from the pen of Alexander Campbell, and that I wanted to second the suggestion of our brother that the brethren cling by the truths discovered by the pioneers, he took his hat and stamped out of the house. I have not seen him since that day, although I understand he is no longer engaged in the work of the Lord.[45]

For Additional Study

The following is a list of articles by W. Carl Ketcherside that discuss the topic of the current chapter in greater detail. All of Ketcherside's essays are available in volumes 1 and 3 of the *e-book* series *The Works of W. Carl Ketcherside*, accessible on Amazon.com and archive.org.

- **"Another Gospel."** *Mission Messenger* **(January 1965): 1.**
- **"Gospel and Doctrine."** *Mission Messenger* **(February 1965): 17.**
- **"Gospel and Doctrine."** *Mission Messenger* **(February 1973): 17.**
- **"Another Gospel."** *Mission Messenger* **(December 1974): 188.**

Chapter 6

COVENANTS OF LAW AND GRACE

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Introduction

> **The nation of the Jews affords both demonstration and proof that man cannot be governed or controlled either in piety or morality by any extrinsic law, however excellent or spiritual. The former institution was an institution of *law*— the new an institution of *favor*. Christians are not now, nor were they ever, under *law*, but under *favor*. Hence argues the Apostle:— "Sin shall not lord it over you; for you are *not under law* but *under favor.*" A single monosyllable represents the active principle, or law of subordination and of practical morality which it unfolds. That monosyllable is Love. "*Love is the fulfilling of the whole law*."— Alexander Campbell, *Christian Baptist* (December 1828):109.**

In 1959, the thinking of Carl Ketcherside underwent a transformation so radical that its significance rivals that of his spiritual encounter in Belfast, Ireland, in 1951. This change, which may have gone unnoticed by many of his readers, is described in detail in his autobiography, an excerpt of which will provide helpful insight into his thinking:

> **I began [in 1959] the series of articles on "Covenants of God." I had become convinced that God had revealed Himself as a covenant-making God. He made covenants with Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Later He made a covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai. They broke His covenant and He promised to make a new one. In it the motives and rules of action would be engraved upon the hearts of men. It became obvious that we were no longer under a written code. The new testament was not composed of twenty-seven books. The new covenant was a person. The apostolic epistles were not a code of jurisprudence.** *They were a collection of love letters written to believers in Jesus who were having difficulty imitating the Master.*
>
> **My whole life was altered. Always before I had been laying down the law instead of living up to love. I had**

become a good lawyer and a poor lover. Now passages seemed to leap from the pages into my heart. "The law was a custodian to bring us to Christ, but after faith is come, we are no longer under a custodian." Later this became the basis of my book *The Death of the Custodian*. Now I had to wrestle with the fact that faith had come. We were no longer under a written code. Everything took on a new perspective. I began to understand the grace of God. I began to see that love was the fulfillment of law. And I began to walk in the Spirit.

I doubt that any other concept I have ever had since I accepted the invitation of Jesus and opened the door to my heart to let Him come in and sup with me, has had the profound effect upon me that the thought of a personal covenant with God has had. The church, redemption, reconciliation, worship, and all other facets of the life of faith took on new depths. Above all else it placed scripture in a completely new and proper context. It became a loving guideline along the road of life.

I began to read the Bible with new eyes. I began to meditate upon it with a new heart. What a blessing it was to realize that the verbal revelation of God was suspended from love for God and one's fellows. "On these two hang the law and the prophets." I could see that what we called the church was simply the called and gathered. It was a universal community of the reconciled. It was the kingdom of heaven doing the will of God on earth as it is in heaven.[1]

Historical Development

In his 1809 *Declaration and Address*, Thomas Campbell proposed a plan to restore the visible unity of the existing Christian community. The plan was originally presented to the founding members of a society of "Voluntary Advocates for Church Reformation," whose purpose was to promote simple evangelical Christianity. In the "Address," which followed the opening "Declaration," Campbell presented 13 propositions

detailing his proposal.[2]

The propositions were not intended to highlight concepts unfamiliar to the Protestant community or to propose beliefs or practices which were new to them.[3] **However, Campbell cautioned that his propositions were not to be regarded as creedal statements required for spiritual fellowship:**

> **Let none imagine that the subjoined propositions are at all intended as an overture toward** *a new creed or standard for the Church***,** *or as in any wise designed to be made a term of communion***; nothing can be further from our intention. They are merely designed for opening up the way, that we may come fairly and firmly to original ground upon clear and certain premises, and take up things just as the apostles left them; that thus disentangled from the accruing embarrassments of intervening ages, we may stand with evidence upon the same ground on which the Church stood at the beginning.**[4]

It was Campbell's view that those to whom his unity plan was addressed already shared in common those practices and beliefs *essential* **to being Christians and to constituting a church of God. Such were already intentionally and essentially united. They were visibly divided, however, by** *non-essentials* **arising from** *doctrinal deductions* **from scripture.**

It was Campbell's proposal that the essentials be retained and the non-essentials be abandoned by all, *as far as fellowship was concerned***. As a benefit, no one would be forced to reject any truth he ever held.**[5] **Only the essentials— already held in common by all— should be required for visible union and communion.**

Campbell appealed to Romans 15:7 as the scriptural basis for his plan for unity: "Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God." If all had been received as sons of God, as it was assumed, on the basis of faith,

repentance, and baptism, then *nothing more should be required for fellowship than was required for sonship***. In summary, Campbell suggested that** *faith* **and** *holiness of conduct* **be the only determinants of spiritual fellowship since an absence of the latter would be a denial of the former.**

Evidence that Campbell's proposal allowed for doctrinal differences is found in the fact that Campbell himself was an avowed Calvinist, affirming his belief in the "perseverance of the saints" as set forth in "The Baptist Catechism" (also known as "Kreach's Catechism," 1851).[6]

Doctrinal differences among believers were to be excluded from matters of fellowship, as they arise from human deductions based on scriptural statements— reflecting not *what God said* **in scripture, but what men** *understood him to mean* **by what he said.**

> **That although inferences and deductions from Scripture premises, when fairly inferred, may be truly called the doctrine of God's holy word, yet are they** *not formally binding* **upon the consciences of Christians** *farther than they* **perceive the connection, and evidently** *see that they are so***; for their faith must not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power and veracity of God. Therefore,** *no such deductions can be made terms of communion***, but do properly belong to the after and progressive** *edification of the Church***. Hence, it is evident that no such deductions or inferential truths ought to have any place in the Church's confession.**[7]

While express *precepts* **and approved** *precedents* **regarding faith, worship, holy living, and church government were to be observed by all— as all were accustomed to do— it was evident that doctrinal deductions could never be shared simultaneously by old and young alike, by both the trained and untrained student in the scriptures. In this regard, Campbell was clear:**

> **That although doctrinal exhibitions of the great system of Divine truths, and defensive testimonies in**

> **opposition to prevailing errors, be highly expedient, and the more full and explicit they be for those purposes, the better; yet as these must be in a great measure** *the effect of human reasoning*, **and of course must contain many inferential truths,** *they ought not to be made terms of Christian communion*; **unless we suppose, what is contrary to fact, that none have a right to the communion of the Church, but such as possess a very clear and decisive judgment, or are come to a very high degree of doctrinal information; whereas** *the Church from the beginning did, and ever will, consist of little children and young men, as well as fathers*.[8]

In other words, deductions from scripture, *when correct*, **should be taught for the purpose of spiritual growth. But such teaching should never be equated with the word of God, except** *to the extent that the listener is able* **to recognize that the deductions are correct. Such deductions should not be required as conditions of fellowship among brothers, as this would place faith in man's ability to reason correctly, rather than in the express will of God found in precepts and approved precedents. Furthermore, as Campbell observed,** *not all are capable of comprehending all truths at the same time*. **To that thought, Robert Richardson adds:**

> **No just distinction whatever would seem to have been drawn by the religious world between fact and theory; faith and opinion; doctrine and speculation; law and expediency. And they would appear to have been, until recently, ignorant of the truth, that** *men never will agree except in generals*. **Each party has been constantly seeking to induce an** *exact conformity to the minute peculiarities of its own creed*, **and no one has been willing to regard these as secondary to the great truths of Christianity.** *But it is a vain attempt, as experience has fully shown, to endeavor to effect a perfect agreement among men in matters of opinion, or even in those minutiae of Christian doctrine with which reason has often as much to do as faith*.

> **"There may be unity in regard to the simple gospel facts; to the grand fundamental truth of Christianity; to the divinely appointed means of salvation; to the one great object of worship; to the one source of spiritual light and truth; to the one cementing principle of mutual love which pervades and animates the body of Christ.** *But how preposterous it is to expect uniformity of opinion* **in a world like this,** *where the minds of men are as diverse as the leaves of the forest!***— a world in which no two states can have the same political government; no two families the same regulations; no two individuals the same tastes and habits!** [9]

Richardson, who was a contemporary of the Campbells and presumably their earliest and best interpreter, provides a practical summary of unity with regard to doctrinal interpretations or human opinions:

> **There are many things not specially treated of in the Scriptures, which it is very necessary and proper for Christians to do, and which may be even involved in the principles of the Christian religion; as there are many things not forbidden in the Scriptures, which nevertheless it would be highly improper for Christians to do, because they are subversive of the very foundations of the Institution. A thing may be** *un***scriptural, but it does not therefore follow that it is** *anti***-scriptural. For instance, the various** *opinions* **entertained by Christians, may be, and of course are,** *un***scriptural— but they are not necessarily** *anti***-scriptural. If, however, they should attempt to impose them upon each other, or** *make them, a term of communion***, this would indeed be** *anti***-scriptural, since we are commanded to** *receive one another without regard to differences of opinion.*[10]

The Law of the New Institution

According to Richardson, Christianity is not a matter of

correct doctrine but of personal holiness. While we are clearly "under law to Christ," it is not a law of doctrinal tenets, as was the law of the first covenant. In the first of a series of essays on the "Nature of Christian Doctrine," Richardson observes:

> **In our last number, we endeavored to direct attention to a very common and a very unfortunate error of the religious world, which consists in supposing** *doctrine* **to be the object of the Christian faith, when, in reality,** *Christ is that object***; thus making the Christian faith** *doctrinal***, when, in fact, it is** *personal***. . . . true Christian faith is simply belief in Christ— a trusting in Christ, . . . it has** *nothing to do with the reception of doctrinal tenets***, such as are propounded in Protestant creeds.[11]**

The "law of Christ," according to Richardson, is the "law of liberty"[12]— the "law of love."[13]

In comparing the governing principle of the old institution with that of the new, Alexander Campbell observed that the patriarchal age was the infancy or childhood of the religious world, whereas the Jewish age was its minority.[14] The period of manhood began with the Christian age.

Unlike a child, a man is allowed to exercise his own judgment. Under the new economy, God has infused into the minds of his children the principles upon which they are to exercise their reason. Consequently, under the new covenant, no rituals or liturgy are prescribed. Rather, the worshippers are allowed "to act from that holy spirit which the gospel inspires. Being . . . children of God.[15]

Six months later, Campbell continues to address the governing principle of the Old and New Institutions in the 28th installment of his "Ancient Order of Things." In summary, Campbell notes that, in contrast to the "Old Institution" or covenant, there is not "a code of laws in the New Institution,

designed to govern Christians either in their private or public relations and character."[16] While this was true under the old covenant, the experience of the Jews under that covenant provides "both demonstration and proof that man cannot be governed or controlled either in piety or morality by any extrinsic law, however excellent or spiritual."[17]

The former was an institution of law; the new, an institution of favor. "Christians are not now, nor were they ever, under law, but under favor." The "active principle" or "law of subordination" and "practical morality" of the new institution is expressed in "a single monosyllable." "That monosyllable is LOVE."[18]

Under the New Institution, the governing principle— for all moral action— is written upon the heart. Yet many Christians have rummaged through the apostolic writings as if they were perusing the writings of Moses— Jews in heart but Christians in profession— seeking for an express command or precedent for every little matter, but in vain.

As Campbell continues, he points to the peculiarity of the new covenant: "that it aims at governing human action without *letter*." Congregations of Christians "are designed rather as schools of moral excellence, than as courts of inquiry possessed of judicial authority."[19]

Eighteen months later, Campbell made his most definitive statement on the governance of the New Institution:

> **This is the great principle of the new Institution; although the two great commandments of the law required the love of the whole heart to God and benevolence equal to self-love, it** *did not afford the strength nor the motive to call them forth***. Hence it was a condemnatory precept, rather than a quickening principle. But now** *the love of God, shed abroad in the heart* **by the Holy Spirit, excites to an activity, and** *imparts an energy which the law could not*

> *do*. . . . **The former was delivered to persons retained in the condition of minors, and it always treated them as such. The latter is addressed to persons in the rank of sons who have passed their minority, and it treats them as such.**[20]

The above statement is remarkable in that it contains what appears to be the only time Campbell explicitly states that the *divine love* **of God, poured out into the heart of the believer by the Holy Spirit,** *imparts* **to the believer the** *energy* **or the** *strength* **to love** *as* **Christ loved—** *something the law could not do*. **For, as he said earlier, "man cannot be governed or controlled either in piety or morality by any extrinsic law, however excellent or spiritual."**

As for the legal status of Christians, Campbell noted in his *Sermon on the Law*, **delivered before the Redstone Baptist Association on Sunday, September 1, 1816:**

> **From these few remarks it will appear, we trust, obvious to every person who has an ear to distinguish truth from falsehood, that there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus— that** *they are under no law that can condemn them***— that** *he* **who was made under the law is become the end of the law for righteousness to them— that being dead to sin, they should live no longer therein— that there is no necessity, but a glaring impropriety in teaching the law as a rule of life to Christians— that all arguments in favor of it are founded on human opinion, and a mistaken view of the tendency of the gospel and Christian dispensation.**[21]

Ceedalism Opposed, Later Adopted

The appeal of the Campbells' unity plan lay in the fact that its principles "would solve the difficult problem of the union of Christians, and yet disturb neither the faith nor the piety of any one."[22] **This was made possible by eliminating creeds—** *the*

source of schism.

Insofar as creeds were mere statements of belief, comparable to sermons or books in which the Christian religion is taught— such as the *Millennial Harbinger*— they received no opposition from Campbell. But the use of Christian doctrine to determine the spiritual status of others— as terms of visible union and communion— he vehemently opposed:

> **We have been represented as disliking creeds for the same reasons that Unitarians and other errorists have disliked them; because, say the orthodox, *no person opposes a creed but he whom the creed opposes*. This is not now, nor was it ever our case. We oppose creeds of human opinions only as terms of communion, or rather as signals of disunion and proscription. It is not the *writing*, any more than the *speaking* or *preaching* our views; but the making of them *authoritative bonds of union and reasons of excommunication*, which we repudiate.[23]**

The theory that unity was possible and feasible without creeds— without requiring doctrinal uniformity— was put to the test when Aylett Raines asked to be received into the Mahoning Baptist Association in 1838, in Warren, Ohio, where Thomas and Alexander Campbell were in attendance. Raines had come under the influence of the Campbells' teaching, but he had long held Universalist views. Some of those present were concerned about the propriety of accepting a Universalist into the Association, where this doctrinal view was generally unacceptable.

Prior to the meeting in which his case was to be decided, Raines recounts how he was approached by Dr. Wright, who challenged him to defend his Universalist views in light of Jesus' statement in Matthew 25:46: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." When asked, "What will you do with this passage?" Raines replied:

> **"I will not do anything with it," said I. "If I argue with you in defense of my opinions I shall make myself a factionist. But I have as much right to argue for my opinions as you have for yours; and if you get up an argument with me, be careful, you will make yourself a factionist."[24]**

When the question of Raines' admission into the Association was formally addressed, Thomas Campbell gave what may be considered *the most practical explanation on record of how his unity proposal was to be applied***. Raines recalls the event:**

> **Bro. Thomas Campbell first responded, as nearly as I can recollect, in words following: The devil has brought this question into this association to sow discord among brethren. Bro. Raines and I have been much together for the last several months, and we have mutually unbosomed ourselves to each other. I am a Calvinist, and he a Restorationist; and, although I am a Calvinist, I would put my right arm into the fire and have it burnt off before I would raise my hand against him. And if I were Paul, I would have Bro. Raines in preference to any other young man of my acquaintance to be my Timothy. Next, Bro. A. Campbell arose, and substantially repeated what he had said in his introductory discourse, on the difference between faith and opinion.[25]**

From the above statements, taken from the early history of the Restoration Movement, there can be no doubt that the position of the Campbells was that no doctrinal deduction— such as an interpretation of Matthew 25:46— was to be used as a test of fellowship. It might be said that for the Campbells, *once* **accepted by God, one was** *always* **to be accepted by his other children, unless, by personal misconduct— whether in the form of unholy behavior or divisiveness— he should deny his profession of faith. Should the latter occur, such a one was to be avoided but exhorted as a brother. In no event was anything to be judged before its proper time.**

It should give pause to many heirs of the Stone-Campbell restoration movement that the "ancient order of things" was *never extended to cover the variety of doctrinal deductions by which the current heirs of the movement are so remarkably divided.* **The "ancient order" was to include only those** *express* **statements in scripture regarding faith in Jesus, the social worship of the church, holiness of life, and the governance of the church. The purpose of restoring the ancient order was not to replicate the "new tabernacle," since it was built by the Lord,** *not man***. Rather, as Campbell wrote:**

> **A restoration of the ancient order of things . . . is all that is wanting to the perfection, happiness, and glory of the Christian community.**[26]

In other words, following the ancient order was, in the Campbells' view, the way to assure the *growth and development***— the sanctification— of each individual in the local congregation. It was never intended to be a legal pattern by which one's status with God or with the brethren was to be determined.**

Five years later, concerned that some within the movement were unwisely raising issues foreign to its initial plea and giving the impression that such matters were part of the ancient order, he published an essay titled "Imprudence of Reformers."

> **Some of the friends of the restoration of the ancient order of things are introducing** *matters entirely extraneous in their pleadings for this cause***. To what purpose is it to preach their views of a Millennium, or of civil government, when contending for the faith formerly delivered to the saints? In making much ado about millennial matters, do they not see that** *their opponents will identify their views of a Millennium with their ancient gospel and ancient order of thing***s? and if there should be a discrepancy, or a peculiarity in their views of the latter day glory, will not their artful opponents connect the most important items of**

> **reform with said discrepancy or peculiarity, and thus endeavor to consign them together to one and the same fate? Remember Paul's resolutions in Corinth. "I determined," says he, "to make known nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified— declaring to you the testimony of God." Other topics at other times, but this was enough for that time and people. The ancient gospel and order of things, with the matters necessarily connected therewith, are sufficient to engross all the energies of the ablest proclaimers in the field.**[27]

With the passing of the Campbells, however, the ancient order— soon to be referred to more commonly as "the New Testament pattern"— *was expanded to include doctrinal deductions as tests of union and communion.* **The simple rule set forth by Paul and repeated by Thomas Campbell— to receive others upon the same basis as Christ received you— was simply ignored. By** *twisting* **the New Testament scriptures, justification was supposedly found for converting doctrinal deductions (interpretations)— which Campbell referred to as human** *opinions***— into matters of faith, that is,** *tests of fellowship***. Such doctrines came to be assigned equal weight with the requirements of the ancient gospel.**

It was at this decisive point that *creedalism was formally introduced into the Restoration Movement***, betraying the principles upon which it was founded. Men began to elevate human understanding** *of what God meant* **by what he said to the level of** *what God said***. Human deductions from scripture came to be equated with a "thus saith the Lord" and then imposed as tests of fellowship— which is precisely the definition of creedalism.**

While the tenets of the "Restoration creed" have never been formally gathered into a single collection, it can readily be constructed by surveying the published lectures, sermons, and other writings of its leaders, as convincingly maintained by William Banowsky, former president of Pepperdine University, in his book *The Mirror of a Movement.*[28]

Ketcherside on The Grace of God

In March of 1959, Ketcherside published his essay "Grace and Faith," in which he points out that there are two sides to salvation: God's side— expressed by the word *grace*— and man's side— expressed by the word *faith*.[29] He further notes that there are numerous expressions of grace: mercy, the blood, the life and name of Christ, and the gospel— all ordained channels through which grace was conveyed. Faith is also expressed through works. Such works as are required of man to appropriate to himself the blessings of grace are not opposed to faith. *So, any condition imposed by faith, or as a test of faith, is not salvation by works versus faith, but salvation by faith at work*. **He concludes that we are saved not by faith** *and* **works but by faith** *which* **works. In this regard, he observes that the gospel authorizes baptism as a condition of salvation by which faith expresses itself, noting that we are not saved because we work for God; rather, we work for God because we are saved.**

In "The Meaning of Grace," published in 1967, Ketcherside notes that many have made grace meaningless by concluding that its function was simply to bring another law. They cannot distinguish between *a written law* **and** *life in Christ* **through the indwelling Spirit. He goes on to explain that if we are to make grace meaningful, we must restore to it the meaning attached by the Spirit after appropriating it from the Greeks and using it to describe God's giving of Himself in Christ. He concludes that there are no conditions attached to grace. All one must do is reach out and take it, but the reaching is not an attached condition— it is merely the means by which the individual appropriates it. However, the acceptance of grace requires utter negation of self, which pride resists. While the grace that brings salvation** *teaches* **us, grace is the teacher, not the act of teaching nor the thing taught.[30]**

Ketcherside on the Two Covenants

In 1976, The Standard Publishing Company released *The Death of the Custodian* by Carl Ketcherside. The author introduces his thesis by pointing out that God has chosen to relate to mankind on the basis of covenants, all designed to achieve the good of those with whom he covenanted. He arranged it so that all blessings and privileges under the covenant were to be enjoyed by means of ordinances. As individuals must pass through stages of development, so it was with the world of mankind. In that respect, the first major covenant of God, mediated through Moses, was designed to train and develop God's people for a mature relationship with himself. Of this covenant Ketcherside writes:

> **The first covenant was a legalistic arrangement. It was designed to keep its subjects in confinement and under restraint, and so the covenant itself was legalistic. It consisted of law.[31]**

However, he adds:

> **The perfect God did not give an imperfect law. The law was perfectly adapted to the purpose for which it was intended. Its inability to justify lay in the fact that it was a law, a written code, not that it was the law of God.[32]**

In order for a law from God to save, it must be obeyed perfectly. Yet the Law was given through Moses precisely to show that this could not be done by any man, except the Anointed One. In Paul's letter to the Galatians, he personifies the covenant of law as a "child-conductor" or "custodian" (3:24, RSV)— a guardian or trustee (4:2, RSV). In this regard, Ketcherside observes:

> **It is important that we understand the nature of a system of law as opposed to a system of faith for justification before God. If we fail to do so, we may simply substitute one law for another, and this would be a fatal error. Any person who seeks to be justified by law must keep that law to perfection. If one proposes to establish a**

relationship based upon deeds of law, he must maintain a meticulous and unvarying obedience to every command, regardless of how minute it may seem. His very life will depend upon such obedience, for he is trading his deeds for life. "The law does not rest on faith, for 'He who does them shall live by them'" (Galatians 3:12; RSV). To put that in reverse, it simply teaches that a man can live under the law only if he does absolutely everything the law requires. The slightest deviation brings condemnation and death.

One cannot set up in his heart a system of justification by law, and *then expect God's grace to rescue him in his failures***. Grace operates through faith and not by law. If we are now under any kind of a written code, seeking for justification, our only hope (if hope it may be called) is to live in constant fear and dread, and keep every provision of that written code without fail.**

This being true, the question naturally arises, "Why then the law?" Why did God institute a covenant consisting of a written code? The question is not new. It was first propounded by an avid student of the law in Galatians 3:19. The inspired answer is found at the same place: "It was added because of transgressions, till the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made" (RSV). The "offspring" is identified in the context as Jesus Christ. The law was added to the promise made to Abraham and was intended to act as a custodian to guard and guide the people in their immaturity until they could be brought to Christ.[33]

As Ketcherside notes, the essence of justification by law is absolute and unvarying conformity to its requirements. In order to keep the law perfectly, man's knowledge and understanding must be perfect from the very moment he first comes under the law. A single mistake results in his becoming guilty of "all the law," according to James, and no amount of future good deeds can ever purge that guilt. Obviously, man is incapable of such perfection.

The fact that man, through his conduct, cannot stand guiltless (justified) before God is not the fault of any law God might have given. The impossibility of moral perfection is due to the fallibility of humankind— the weakness of the sinful nature. Furthermore, law does not provide a means of compensating for imperfect behavior. In contrast, Paul says, "*what the law was powerless to do* **because it was weakened by the flesh,** *God did* **by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering" (Romans 8:3;** *italics added***).**

Consequently, when writing to the Galatians, some of whom were apparently trying to restore the vitality of law as a means of acceptance with God, Paul makes clear that if it were possible for man to be justified as a result of keeping a law from God, *such a law would have been given***, and "righteousness would indeed be by the law" (3:21). The crucifixion could have been avoided. The cup that Jesus drank** *could* **have— and, no doubt, would have— been taken away.**

In this same letter to the Galatians, Paul makes it clear that the two systems of justification— one by law and the other by grace— are simply incompatible. "You who are trying to be justified by the law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace" (5:4)— to which he adds, "I am confident in the Lord that you will take no other view" (v. 10).

Faith in the perfect obedience of Christ **on behalf of the sinner is not compatible with** *faith in one's own ability to obey God perfectly***, nor with faith that one's shortcomings will be compensated for by the merits of Christ. Either Christ takes our place before God, or we stand upon our own performance. There is no other alternative. One or the other must be chosen, for to attempt one is to reject the other. So it is that we sing:**

When He shall come with trumpet sound,
Oh may I then *in Him* **be found,**
*Dressed in His righteousness alone***,**

Faultless to stand before the throne.

Those who reject the idea of Christ standing in our place appear to do so because they think of salvation by grace as being salvation *without* works on the part of the believer. While this may hold true in some forms of Hyper-Calvinism, it is not in keeping with the clear statements that define an inactive faith as a dead faith. As Ketcherside would say, we are not saved because we work, but we work because we are saved.[34]

Since obedience is required under both the old covenant of law and the new covenant of grace, how then do grace and law differ? Ketcherside responds:

> **The answer lies in the fact that the word "law" has a wide range of meanings. When we read that we are not under law, the apostle is not telling us that we are no longer under the sovereignty of God, but that we are no longer under a written code or legalistic system. We can no longer strive for justification, or seek to arrive at guiltlessness, by observance of such a code laid down or imposed from without. Law, in its primal meaning, is a principle of action. It is the basis, or foundation, the motivating dynamic that governs our whole course of conduct.[35]**

He further explains:

> **God does not write numbered statutes and commandments upon our hearts as the Romans engraved laws upon the twelve bronze tablets in the Forum, or as His finger carved the Ten Commandments upon two tablets of stone at Sinai. Instead, He *infuses our hearts with a divine principle of action*, and this spontaneously and automatically responds in harmony with His will. Incorporated within that principle, which involves the divine nature or essence, is the fulfillment of all the commands of God, not as a way of life, but as "the life of the Way."**

It is for this reason Paul writes, in contrasting the old covenant with the new, that God made the apostles the qualified ambassadors or administrative agents of the "new testament" or covenant. That covenant was not based upon a written code, but upon the Spirit, because a written code can only terminate in death. Instead, the Spirit gives *life*. Law says, "Do these things and you shall live." The Spirit says, "*You live*, so do these things." The law starts with man as he is, inducing him *to seek to achieve life by his effort*. "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them" (Romans 10:5; KJV).

In plain language this means that under a regime of law, life is dependent upon human performance. Law must be kept meticulously or it is not kept at all. The slightest infraction results in death. The "fly in the ointment" is the fact that man in the flesh cannot keep law perfectly. It is an impossibility, not because of the weakness of the law, but because of the weakness of the flesh. A system based upon law-keeping can never produce righteousness or justification. "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20). No flesh! Law can make men aware of their weakness and sin. It can produce a sense of failure and guilt upon the part of those who seek to submit to it. Never can it produce guiltlessness in any person who is in the flesh![36]

Regarding obedience, Ketcherside adds:

Those who are in Christ are dead to the principles of legalistic righteousness. The custodian who held them is dead. His nerveless grasp has been broken from their necks. Now they are delivered and freed from a written code. That basis of justification is deceased, declared invalid by God's marvelous grace. The purpose is that all of us should serve in newness of spirit and not in the oldness of a written code. This, I think, is what Paul is

> **saying in Romans 7:6: "Now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter" (KJV). There is no intimation that service to God is relaxed because the principle of legalistic rectitude is dead. We serve, but it is in newness of spirit. Just because we have matured and the custodian is dead, these facts do not lessen our responsibility. Our very maturity increases that responsibility.[37]**

Given the death of the custodian and the fact of our receiving, as our own, the life of Christ himself, Ketcherside moves to examine the principle infused in our minds and written upon our hearts as the rule of action under the new covenant.

He first refers the reader to Paul's statement to the Romans that "love is the fulfilling of the law" (13:9–10; KJV). Although it has always been God's purpose to establish a right relationship with humankind, this cannot be accomplished by an external law that only makes one conscious of his failure and guilt. No law can make him guiltless. But while law is external, love is internal.

> **When one is justified by faith, which is the only way he can be justified, he attains peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. Through Jesus he gains access to grace, in which state he can rejoice in hope of the glory of God. This hope never disappoints the one who is at one with God, "because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Romans 5:5). The first covenant was one of law, the second is one of love.[38]**

While we are instructed to "owe no man anything," our debt of love *always* remains outstanding. "I do not love God's children because I am in debt to them," Ketcherside says, "but because I am in debt to Him." For, as John says, "if God *so* loved us, we *ought* also to love one another" (1 John 4:11), to which he prefaces, "This is how we know what love is: Jesus

Christ laid down his life for us. And we *ought* to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters" (3:16).

In summarizing his thesis in *The Death of the Custodian*, Ketcherside comments on Paul's statement to the Romans: "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (10:4). He writes:

> **This means that our acceptance of the good news of the grace of God is not upon the basis of obedience to law. It is not by meritorious works performed in a kind of barter system. We do not trade our effort for a reward. We do not deposit our good deeds in a heavenly vending machine and await the desired result to come tumbling down. Paul tells us, "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:26, 27; KJV). Faith is not a work demanded by law, for if it were we would still be under a custodian. Baptism is not an act of law. It is simply faith activated. It is demonstrated and manifested in the only way that vital faith in Christ can be shown: by loving response to His example and will.**
>
> **For years I struggled to please God on the basis of conformity to a written code. I regarded the apostolic letters as a compilation of judgments, statutes, and judicial requirements. I felt that these demanded perfect obedience under threat of eternal condemnation.**
>
> **Since I had been taught that we were under "the new law," I began with that presupposition, and everything that was written I interpreted within that frame of reference. Accordingly, grace became merely another vehicle through which law was conveyed. Faith was to be used as the grappling-hook by which one scaled the steep side of the mountain as he agonized upward toward God. Present always within one who takes this mental route is the sense of his own failure.** *He is not righteous by his own makeshift criterion, and he knows that he*

is not.

In order to live with oneself under such a system it is necessary to engage in casuistry, and this amounts to self-deception. The person selects some items with which he can relate and invests them with an aura of importance, which really belongs to the total relationship. By emphasizing these and maintaining a degree of loyalty in their defense, he flatters himself that he is faithful to God. What this does, of course, is to lead him into a frightful state of self-righteousness. He becomes a worshiper of his own mental and moral powers, and demonstrates his insecurity by aggressive assaults upon others.

I have been delivered from the fears, inhibitions, and hostilities, which seem to be the natural result of confinement. I am free to examine the marvelous revelation of God in a new and open way. I marvel at the fact that God, sinless and perfect, was willing to enter into a covenant with me, as sinful and imperfect as I am. I rejoice in it, even though I can neither fully comprehend or explain it. The divine agreement by which I became a son of God is written in my heart by the Holy Spirit. My own heart is an "ark of the covenant." It is here God dwells through the divine Comforter or Helper.

I read the New Covenant Scriptures now with the eyes of my understanding being enlightened. They are more precious to me, and I have a deeper sense of hunger for their content. I regard the letters of the envoys for what they are: letters of love written to those caught up in the human predicament. They were written to assure those people that they have eternal life. They are letters of correction, admonition, and exhortation. They were never intended to develop legal or technical specialists, but lovers of God and men. They speak to me with new depth and power.

I look at life with a new sense of its meaning, since I realize that eternal life was embodied in Christ Jesus, and through Him we share in that wonderful transcendent

dimension of existence. He has put all history into proper focus for me, including the agony as well as the ecstasy. Eternal life is to know God and His Son, to experience a creative relationship with them, which, even though it entails suffering here, will result in glory.

I face death as the "great adventure," the final transforming and transferring event, the gateway to eternal rest, the door to peace in its ultimate. Hope becomes a greater comfort when one realizes that it never disappoints because the love of God is poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Perfect love casts out fear, and that includes the fear of death.[39]

Ketcherside on the Twisted Scriptures

In *Mission Messenger* for 1965, Ketcherside focused his writing on passages of scripture that he believed had been twisted or perhaps unintentionally manipulated to support the idea that one's doctrinal understanding is to be used as a litmus test in determining his fidelity to God and, consequently, his acceptability as a brother. Rather than complying with Paul's injunction to "Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you" (Romans 15:7), the terms of acceptability were expanded to include doctrinal deductions ("opinions," in the vocabulary of Alexander Campbell) that were not originally required in order to be accepted by Christ. As noted earlier, this was the point at which creedalism was introduced into the Stone-Campbell restoration movement, contrary to its most characteristic and fundamental plea. Doctrinal views ceased to be simply shared for edification and became "*authoritative bonds of union and reasons of excommunication*."[40]

Ketcherside introduces his book with the following passage from the apostle Peter:

Bear in mind that our Lord's patience with us is our salvation, as our beloved brother Paul wrote to you, out of

> **the wisdom he had received, speaking of this matter as he does in all of his letters, some of which contain certain difficult and obscure statements, which those who are untaught and unstable, distort as they do the other scriptures, to their own destruction (2 Peter 3:15, 16).**

After warning of the serious consequences that may result from misinterpreting or misapplying God's revelation, he adds:

> **In this volume I am going to concern myself with the use of scripture to divide and fragment the family of God, and to excuse and justify the very schism which the Word deplores and condemns.[41]**

He then proceeds to examine a number of passages of scripture that have been twisted to support dividing the church over human deductions from scripture or doctrinal interpretations.

Amos 3:3

> *Can two walk together, except they be agreed?*

The first of the twisted scriptures examined by Ketcherside is the above statement by Amos, quoted from the King James Version. Ketcherside observes:

> **Can two walk together unless they be agreed? Do two people have to agree upon everything in the world before they can walk together? If so, no two people on earth will walk together, or ever have done so. Shall we interpret God's word to forbid and make absolutely impossible the very unity which it repeatedly commands? But I am told that this does not mean they must agree upon everything. This surrenders the whole argument. Either two people must agree upon everything in order to walk together or else two people can walk together who are not agreed. . . .[42]**

He goes on to explain that the original word for "agreed" is a primitive Hebrew root, *yaad*, which Strong defines as "to fix upon (by agreement or appointment); by implication, to meet (at a stated time), to summon (to trial), to direct (in a certain quarter or position), to engage (for marriage)."

> **The word translated "agreed" has not one thing to do with the attitude, purpose or nature of two people while walking together.** *The agreement is to meet and walk together, and is not related to walking together in agreement.* **The agreement or appointment precedes the walking together as the cause precedes the effect. The word *yaad* is not marriage, but engagement to marry. It is not occupying a position, but directing one to it. It is not a trial, but the summons issued to appear for trial. It is not the state of walking together, but a prior appointment to meet and walk. Men might make an agreement to meet and walk together to debate their differences.**[43]

It is noted that the same Hebrew word occurs in *Job*, where it is translated:

> **"Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had** *made an appointment together* **to come to mourn with him and to comfort him." (Job 2:11, KJV;** *Italics added.*)

It follows, then, that Amos 3:3 could simply be translated: *Can two walk together, except they be agreed to?* **As may be seen from the context, verse 3 appears in a list of rhetorical questions, the answers to which are all negative. Consequently, if this question is understood incorrectly— as if implying that agreement in thinking is required as a prerequisite to walking together— the outcome is nonsensical, since no two people who walk together agree on everything. In fact, it was the premise of Thomas Campbell's unity plea that Christians could be visibly united without holding uniform doctrinal views. The early**

Restoration fathers had clear opinions on the correct interpretation of Amos 3:3, and *they did not believe that doctrinal agreement was required in order to walk together as one in Christ*.[44]

In summarizing his position, Ketcherside writes:

> **The fact is that God took me as I was, in my ignorance and arrogance. He accepted me not because I was worthy but because I was not. And He did it because, in His infinite grace, He was able to love me in spite of myself. The divine-human fellowship is one which spans vast areas of human ignorance. It makes it possible for the Maker to receive into His bosom those who cannot read or write, those who are not only ignorant of fine-spun, and even rough-hewn doctrinal distinctions, but who may not even be able to spell doctrine. The unity proposed by the Father is predicated upon faith, and that faith is simply trust in a person, a trust so great and powerful as to motivate the believer to commit his whole life and being to that person as Lord and ruler.**
>
> **The word of God is quite plain as to the basis upon which we must receive one another. "Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God" (Romans 15:7). It would seem fairly obvious, I think, even if the apostle had not stated it so bluntly, that we should receive each other on the same basis as God received us all. The divine grounds of acceptance ought not to be improved upon by mere mortals. This means we will need to receive those who do not see a lot of things as we do, and never will. We shall have to receive them upon the basis of their faith in Jesus and in spite of some of their immature ideas and peculiar notions. . . .**
>
> **When men respond to the good news about Jesus by their acknowledgment of the proposition that He is the Anointed One, the Son of God, and by being baptized as an acknowledgment of His Lordship over their lives, we receive them, for it is upon this basis God receives them. We no more assent to all of their opinions, ideas or**

concepts than God does. We do not receive them because of the number of things upon which they are right, but because they have been set right with God, being justified by faith![45]

Galatians 1:6–9

> *I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.*

In order to designate a thing as "another gospel," it is first necessary to identify the original gospel. In the new covenant writings, the gospel is not a system of doctrinal deductions or a compilation of laws; it is good news about what a person has done for us in our hopeless and helpless condition. It isn't a message for the saved but for the lost. It is never announced to saints, but always to sinners. It is our translation of *euangelion*—something never preached to the church, except by way of reference or reminder, but to the world.

In this regard, Ketcherside explains:

> **The careful student of the Galatian letter will at once see that the good news was a proclamation that we are justified by faith in Christ and not by works of law (2:16). There was no good news in a reign of law. Those who rely for justification upon works of law are under a curse (3:10). No man can be justified before God by law (3:11). If justification were through law, Christ died to no purpose (2:21). If inheritance were by law it was not by promise (3:18). The utter futility of law lies in the fact that**

it must leave men dead. "For if a law had been given which could make alive, then righteousness would indeed be by law" (3:21). There is no such law, either human or divine.

> **Law confines and keeps under restraint. It binds but cannot free (3:23). It makes a person under it "no better than a slave" (4:1). Men had to be redeemed from it before they could even receive adoption as sons (4:5). It is impossible to be justified by faith in Jesus and try to be justified by law at the same time, because one binds while the other frees. One cannot be both a slave and a son, because the adoption as sons frees from the bondage of law. One who seeks to be justified by law, or by legal conformity, severs himself from Jesus. "You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you are fallen away from grace" (5:4). Nothing is plainer than the statement, "You are not under law, but under grace." You cannot be under both at once. . . .[46]**

While salvation is a state of right relationship with God, it is not what we do for God that brings us into this relationship, but what he has done for us. We are saved by grace through faith, but it is not of ourselves— not of works. We were formerly slaves (Galatians 4:1) and had nothing with which to purchase our redemption. Nevertheless, we were adopted into the family of God. Ketcherside writes:

> **Our response to the grace which sent a person to become sin for us, and to reconcile us, is faith in that person. This is what justifies. Justification has to do with freedom from guilt. We are not justified because we are guiltless for all of us are guilty. We are not justified because we have done something to free ourselves from guilt for no one can ever undo an act he has committed. Not even God can do that! We cannot "take back" what we have done. But Jesus is guiltless. He is the sinless one.** *If we are in Jesus we are not in a sinless state but in a sinless person***. If we trust in his righteousness, that faith or trust is** *reckoned unto us as righteousness, or justification***. Justification must always be a gift of God. We cannot give**

> **anything to God to meet a need of His. We must be always on the receiving end.[47]**

To one who works, salvation is not a gift— he has something coming to him to which he is entitled. But no man is entitled to anything from God. He cannot be placed in our debt. Rather, Paul says, "To one who does not work, but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness" (Romans 4:5). Being in Christ does not mean we have no sin or that our sinful acts have been undone. It doesn't mean we do not still sin. It simply means that in Christ, God can treat us *as if* we were sinless. Through Jesus he can reckon or count our faith as righteousness and not reckon our sins. He regards us as if we had none!

The gospel is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He is the good news— the greatest good news in all the history of sinful man.

> **Paul declared that the message brought to Galatia was "Jesus Christ publicly portrayed (or placarded) as crucified" (3:1). The truth of that gospel, that is, the essence, the basis, the central theme was justification by faith in Jesus Christ. Truth is reality, stripped of all extraneous matter and naked of all artificial covering. The glad tidings to the world consisted of announcement of the most tremendous, magnificent and earth-shaking principle in the universe— that justification is by faith in the Son of God. This is the core of the message. This is "the truth of the gospel."[48]**

In the days of the apostles, those who were in Christ were in error on many points, but they were never charged with "preaching another gospel." *Being free from error is not a condition of salvation, or all men would be condemned.* **It is not by the attainment of a certain degree of knowledge that we are saved, but by faith or belief in facts related to Jesus. We are not justified before God by our grasp of abstract truth, nor by performance of meritorious deeds or legalistic conformity. In**

fact, when we maintain that we are justified by knowledge, we hang ourselves on the gallows we have constructed to rid ourselves of others— "unless," as Ketcherside puts it, "we are prepared to make ourselves even more ridiculous by affirming that we know as much as God."[49]

No honest opinion held by one who is in Christ and respects his lordship is "another gospel." Such an opinion can never be made a test of spiritual fellowship in Jesus, since it is the gospel that forms the basis of our fellowship with the Father, the Son, and with one another in Christ.

> **A man may hold a view as to the perseverance of the saints, the manner of the resurrection, or the second coming of our Lord, and he may prove to be as wrong as one could be, but he cannot be debarred from citizenry in the kingdom of heaven by the other subjects, any more than one can be disenfranchised in the United States because he disagrees with the government space program or the approach to overseas help.**
>
> **No man "preaches another gospel" simply by being mistaken about some aspects of the will of God, otherwise one would need to know perfectly the divine will or he would be a perverter of the gospel.[50]**

Late in life, Alexander Campbell had the following to say about the "gospel" to which Paul refers in Galatians 1:6–9:

> **The *one gospel*, we confidently affirm, is like its divine author, "the same yesterday, to-day and forever." It is not a doctrine. It is not a theory. It is not a philosophy. It is not an orthodoxy or an heterodoxy. It is simply a *declaration* of the grace, or favor, or mercy of God our Father, in and through the gracious gift and sacrifice of his only begotten and dearly beloved Son.[51]**

*Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them***.**

This scripture, written to protect and preserve the church from division, has, according to Ketcherside, likely suffered more wresting, twisting, and distortion than most. Consequently, it has been made to apply to every dissenter from the party line.

> **The passage has been cited as grounds for excommunication of individuals whose consciences no longer allow them to kowtow to legalistic decisions or to "toe the party line." Indeed, it has been employed to justify attack upon a congregation, or group of congregations, whose constituents had learned that the will of God was not served by the factional spirit, and whose only sin consisted of asserting their freedom in Christ Jesus. It has been a verbal club in the mouths of partisan leaders to try and "hold in line" those who had continued to study and were no longer interested in goose-stepping to a party tune. In the eyes of a sectarian leader anyone who differs with him is guilty of causing divisions and offences. He is acting "contrary to the doctrine which he learned," for the doctrine he learned was the factional interpretation which the leader taught.**
>
> **What did Paul mean by "the doctrine which you have learned?" Whatever he meant it was something in which the Romans had previously been instructed before the apostle penned this admonition. The expression is in the past tense. Since Paul had never been to Rome it is obvious that "the doctrine" is what he had taught in the previous part of this epistle, if he referred to what they had learned from him. In spite of that, I have heard this passage quoted and the expression "the doctrine which you have learned" applied to every little element of trivia which has disturbed the saints in the twentieth century. Every sect and faction regards its distinctive, peculiar and particular emphasis as "the doctrine you have learned," and those who subscribe to these partisan hangups are**

> **urged and exhorted to "mark" those who do not. Indeed, there is not a rallying point for any sect, regardless of how small and insignificant, which has not been exalted to "the doctrine you have learned," even though it has been taught but a decade or less! Certainly, the saints in Rome never learned "the doctrine" which is debated in our day and used as a club to batter into submission or into silence those whose thought processes refuse to stop working![52]**

From the context, it seems evident that the doctrine the Romans had learned from Paul was that *division among brethren is a sin*: "Do not cause division or place an occasion of stumbling in a brother's way." This was the content of the four preceding chapters, as Ketcherside points out in detail.

For example, in the previous chapter, Paul admonishes:

> **The strong must accept as their own burden the tender scruples of weaker men and not consider themselves (15:1). Each must consider his own neighbor and think what is for his good and will build up the common life together. We are all to accept one another as Christ has accepted us, to the glory of God (15:7). As God accepted us in our weakness, with mistaken ideas, warped views and unhealthful attitudes, so we must accept each other in the same state or condition. We must not make the kingdom of heaven to consist of our convictions attitudes or opinions, but of citizens who must be tolerant of one another in such matters, otherwise there can be no kingdom of heaven at all. The doctrine the Corinthians learned was not to cause division, but to walk in peace, making allowance for differences.[53]**

A careful analysis of Romans 16:17–18 will show that the apostle is not advocating that a congregation should excommunicate certain individuals. In fact, the letter is addressed not to a congregation but to individual saints.

> **The "avoiding" here recommended to the brethren is individual. They are simply told to steer clear of those**

who would create division and to stay out of their way.[54]

Early in what I have referred to as his "definitive" years, Ketcherside engaged in "An Analysis of Romans 16:17" in a 1959 article titled "Causing Division." He prefaces his analysis of the passage by saying, "I shall show that it has been made to imply exactly opposite to what it says." After posing the question, "What is 'the doctrine which you have learned'?" he proceeds to answer:

> **The doctrine they had learned was to not cause divisions and offences. In chapter 12:5, they had learned they were one body, and members one of another. In 12:10 they had learned to love one another with brotherly affection, and outdo one another in showing honor. In 12:16 they had learned to live in harmony with one another. In 13:13 they had learned to conduct themselves becomingly, and not in quarreling and jealousy.**
>
> **In 14:1 they had learned they should welcome one who was weak in faith, but not for disputes over opinions. In 14:13 they had learned not to pass judgment on a brother, and never to place a stumblingblock or occasion to fall in a brother's way. In 14:19 they had learned to follow after peace and things wherewith one might edify another. In the face of all this doctrine, or teaching, about love, unity, forbearance, and mercy, if someone still caused division or offence by refusing to receive a brother, or by intolerance for one whose opinion differed, such a person was to be marked and avoided. It was not the holding of an opinion that was contrary to the doctrine, for the doctrine was, "Welcome him, but not for disputes over opinions." The doctrine they had learned was "One believes he may eat anything, while the weak man eats only vegetables." It was not necessary for all to believe alike, or to be agreed upon every point, to be welcomed.[55]**

After observing what the Romans had "learned" from Paul, Ketcherside goes on to examine Paul's instruction on how

they were to deal with those who failed to conform to what they had been taught:

> **It was contrary to the doctrine to cause divisions and offences. Brethren were to be welcomed in spite of opinions, not driven out because of them. Who was to be marked and avoided? It was the schismatic who caused division by refusing to accept as brethren those whose opinions differed, for such division was contrary to the doctrine which said to receive them and not sit in judgment upon their opinions. There are two kinds of schismatics. One injects his opinion about a thing and seeks to build a party around it; the other sets up an unwritten law in which he makes opposition to such an opinion his test of fellowship. Either of these will cause division contrary to the doctrine which says to "maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."**
>
> **The apostle was not talking about classes, containers for the fruit of the vine, baptisteries, tuning forks, colleges, orphan homes, missionary societies, fermented wine, unleavened bread, a special way of breaking the loaf, instrumental music, the pre-millennial theory, and all that host of things used as the occasion for splitting, shivering and riving the churches of the saints into splinters and fragments. These may, or may not, be wrong, but the apostle has no reference to them here. The doctrine we have learned is that it is sinful to hate, judge, despise and divide the brethren. Without realizing it, every partisan who has used Romans 16:17, to justify his pet division, and condone his unwritten creed, has pronounced his own condemnation by quoting this verse.**[56]

2 Thessalonians 3:6

> *Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which ye received of us.*

The above instruction of Paul to the Thessalonians has been used by every faction and sect against honest dissenters who have disagreed with the powers that be. This has been justified by a misuse of two phrases it contains: "withdraw yourselves" and "walketh disorderly."

The instruction to "withdraw yourselves" has been misused and misquoted to teach "withdrawal of *fellowship*" by a congregation. However, as Ketcherside observes, this passage teaches neither the "withdrawal of fellowship" nor corporate action by a congregation. Furthermore, it isn't related to any mistaken view or deduction from scripture. Rather, the context specifically applies the term "disorderly" to daily conduct. Having a mistaken concept about scripture is never referred to as walking disorderly. Otherwise, it would refer to every member of the body of Christ, without exception (1 Corinthians 8:2).

Regarding the instruction to "withdraw yourselves," Ketcherside observes:

> **The expression "withdraw fellowship" is not found in the sacred scriptures. This ought to give pause to those who claim to "speak where the Bible speaks, and remain silent where the Bible is silent." The word "fellowship" is our inadequate English translation of *koinonia*, a Greek term which means "to share a common life." The life which we share in common is eternal life. It dwells with the Father and was made visible to the apostles. One of them wrote, "What we have seen and heard we declare to you, so that you and we together may share in a common life, that life which we share with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3. NEB).**
>
> **No man or group of men can receive one into this fellowship. No man or group of men can withdraw it. The fellowship can neither be extended nor withdrawn by any being in the flesh. It can only be shared. Men cannot dispense eternal life, nor can they deny it. We are called**

> **into the fellowship of Jesus Christ by the Father Himself, and His fidelity is at stake in the call (1 Cor. 1:9). The New English Version aptly renders this, "It is God himself who called you to share in the life of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and God keeps faith."[57]**

The context of Paul's instruction to the Thessalonians indicates that he is addressing the idleness into which some had drifted, a concern he had already addressed in his first letter. This would appear to be "*the tradition which ye received of us***."**

> **But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more; And that ye study** *to be quiet,* **and** *to do your own business***, and to** *work with your own hands***, as we commanded you; That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing. (1 Th 4:9-12, KJV;** *italics added***.)**

Apparently, some of the saints at Thessalonica had mistakenly concluded that the return of Christ was imminent and had quit their jobs, believing there was no further need to work. Consequently, they were living off the other brethren. Furthermore, being idle, they had begun to pry into the affairs of others, becoming busybodies. Paul specifically noted that they were "working not at all" (verse 11) and labeled such behavior as "walking disorderly." He contrasts such disorderly conduct with his own example of working day and night to avoid eating anyone's food without paying for it.

With regard to those who were refusing to get a job and continuing to sponge off others, Paul instructs: "Keep away from any brother who is living in idleness" (*Revised Standard Version***), "Keep away from all brothers who are living a lazy life" (***Today's English Version***), "Shun every brother who behaves as a shirker" (***The Authentic Version***), "Keep yourselves from**

every brother who behaves like a truant" (*Barclay*), and "Hold aloof from every Christian brother who falls into idle habits" (*The New English Bible*).

Regarding Paul's instruction, Ketcherside observes,

> **There is not the slightest intimation of congregational or corporate action. It has no relationship to public or formal discipline. It is individual. No action is taken on the idle person. Nothing is done to him. He is simply left where he is while the brethren step back from him. To "withdraw yourselves" means to step back, to retreat, or to retire from the scene. Observe that the one from whom the brethren are to step back or hold themselves aloof is a brother, although a lazy one who is living in idleness. Paul twice refers to the lazy individual as a brother.[58]**

Again, it is important to note that the Thessalonians were *not* instructed to withdraw spiritual fellowship from anyone. They were merely to withdraw their association from the idle brother— "*have no company with him*"— so that "he may be ashamed" of his behavior.

Ketcherside continues:

> **The brethren in Thessalonica were simply commanded to refrain from extending hospitality to loafers and slackers. They were not to feed them for the command was that "if any would not work neither should he eat" (verse 10). If one of these dawdling drones appeared at the front door just before mealtime, he was to be offered a job instead of food. If he refused the former, he was to be refused the latter. One who shunned honest toil was to be gently shunted from the table. It was just that simple.[59]**

With regard to the one whose disorderly behavior persists,

Ketcherside notes:

> **Although the offender is to be noted and hospitality refused while he persists in idleness, the record says, "Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." Refusal to furnish food for such a person does not mean he is to be treated as a heathen. He is simply a lazy and indolent brother, who must be shunned to save him from his course. When a man cannot be reached through appeal to his heart he may have to be reached through appeal to his stomach. So long as his head is empty and his stomach is full little can be done.[60]**

It is to be lamented that an apostolic instruction designed to correct idle conduct among brethren, has been used to justify division among the people of God. Oddly enough, however, it seems never to have been used to address the very problem which the apostle describes at Thessalonica.

1 John 1:7

> *But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*

This passage from John's first epistle has been used to justify the practice of excluding from spiritual fellowship in the church those who differ from traditional doctrinal views. Such justification is based on a misunderstanding of what John means by the phrase "walk in the light."

While it is true that the metaphors *darkness* **and** *light* **are used in scripture to represent ignorance and knowledge, this cannot be the meaning of the phrase that John has in mind, as Ketcherside explains:**

> **In this connection, we can eliminate from consideration anything which it is not possible for man to**

possess in the same degree as God, that is, in an absolute or perfect degree. "God is light and in him is no darkness at all . . . If we walk in the light *as he is in the light*." This immediately excludes knowledge of God's will from consideration. It is obvious that none of us can have the same degree of mental perception as God. The finite mind cannot embrace the scope of the infinite. To walk in the light cannot mean either to perfectly understand God's will or to perfectly do it. This would require something we do not have in the flesh.[61]

Upon close examination of John's letter, it becomes evident that he uses the word *light* to represent the divine *love* that characterizes God's nature. Ketcherside explains:

The love of which John speaks is *agape*, the love which God had for us which prompted him to send Jesus to die for us in our unworthiness. It is *that active and energetic good will which stops at nothing to achieve the good of the beloved object*. It must be expressed. It can never be passive. It is apprehended in its demonstration which is always outreaching and outgoing. "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us" (3:16). It is this in which we must walk. This is the light and Jesus was light embodied.

Light is love and since the opposite of light is darkness, the darkness must be hate. Once this is grasped every sentence in the epistle falls into place like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle and a beautiful picture results. Let us proceed with the proof of our assertion. To abide in the light is to love the brethren. "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him" (2:10). If this is correct, hatred for the brethren will be darkness. "He that saith he is in the light and hateth his brother is in darkness even until now" (2:9). This last is the equivalent of saying, "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie" (1:6). "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar" (4:20).[62]

Ketcherside continues:

> **And if it be true that light is love, it must follow that, if God is light, God is love. On this the record is positive. "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (4:16). "He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love" (4:8). To the serious student nothing else should be necessary to identify the light. When a writer says, "God is light," and in the very same letter twice explains what he means by saying, "God is love," it should require little intellectual ability to determine that in the context of that writer,** *light is love*.[63]

If *light* **is** *love*, **and John says we must walk in the light to the extent that God is in the light, must we not conclude that what God requires is that we love in the same way and to the extent that he loves? In this regard, Ketcherside writes:**

> **When the love of God was personalized in Jesus, God revealed the possibility of incarnating the divine nature. That nature had always existed but was never expressed before as it was in Christ. "In him the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily" (Col. 2:9). In him the world could see love manifested. The nature possessed by God could now be incorporate in man, for true love was now available. "A new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth" (2:8). The true love was now reality in flesh.**
>
> **The love that God requires He supplies. It is a fruit of the Spirit. It is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us of God (Romans 5:5). It did not originate with man but with God. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us" (1 John 4:10). "We love because he first loved us" (4:19). When God dwells in us His love is perfected in us (4:12). "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love: and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we**

may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world" (4:16, 17). Our love is made perfect! And as he is, so are we— and in this world![64]

In reference to the fact that John assures his readers they may know they have eternal life (5:1), Ketcherside summarizes:

. . . Eternal life is not having a copy of the Bible, but having the Son of God. "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life" (5:12).

Where is the congregation of believers which will brazenly affirm that it is composed only of those who know as much about God's will and purpose as God Himself? If the light in which we must walk to have fellowship, is knowledge of God's revelation, we must be either as perfect in knowledge as God or we cannot be in the fellowship. "If we walk in the light *as he is in the light***, we have fellowship one with another." God is light and in him is no darkness at all." If darkness is ignorance, we cannot be ignorant of anything in the universe. We must know all there is to know, and be as wise as God, or else we walk in darkness. If we say we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness— if we are ignorant about anything— we lie and do not the truth.[65]**

2 John 9-11

Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

Among the "twisted scriptures" examined by Ketcherside, that of 2 John 9–11 well illustrates the danger of ignoring the biblical context. These words of the apostle of brotherly love

have been misused by factionists of every stripe as a tool "to pry apart the living stones in the temple of God" and employed as "a murderous knife to dismember the body of the Lord."

The context of John's first and second epistles, as most scholars agree, concerns a situation in which Gnostic teachers were attempting to convince those to whom John wrote that Jesus could not have come in a human body since, according to them, all matter is evil. Consequently, they claimed that Jesus merely appeared to have a human body. The Gnostics not only denied that Jesus had come in the flesh, but they also traveled about attempting to draw Christians into their own sect.

John warns the recipients of his first letter that denying the Son constitutes a simultaneous denial of God the Father:

> **Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also" (1 John 2:22-23, KJV).**

Later in the same letter, he specifies how one may deny the Son:

> **"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." (1 John 4:2-3, KJV)**

Those who had fallen under the influence of Gnostic teachers showed themselves to be something other than Christians by denying that Jesus had come into the world in a human body. In so doing, they proclaimed that God was a liar. John concludes that these were not true Christians. They not only denied the Lord but were also schismatic in their teaching:

> **"They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." (1 John 2:19, KJV)**

When John writes his second epistle, he is concerned that the recipients of his letter not be led astray by those whom he identified in his first letter as "antichrists"— those who denied that Jesus had come in the flesh:

> **"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist" (2 John 1:7, KJV).**

Concerning the epistle, Ketcherside writes:

> **It was written to a sister in the Lord. Some of her children were following the truth (verse 4). The congregation may have met in her house. John wrote the same thing to her in verses 5 and 6 that he wrote in 1 John 2:7-9. He tells her "many deceivers have gone out into the world" (verse 7) as he previously said, "Many false prophets have gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1). He identifies these as "men who will not acknowledge the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh" (Cp. verse 7 with 1 John 4:3) and labels them in both instances as "antichrist."**
>
> **In verse 9, he tells the sister, "Any one who goes ahead and** *does not abide in the doctrine of Christ* **does not have God; he who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son." The doctrine of Christ is the testimony "that the Father has sent His Son as the Savior of the world" (1 John 4:14), that is, that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh (4:2). Those who go ahead and do not abide in this conviction do not have God, but those who retain this conviction, have both the Father and the Son. As phrased in 1 John 2:23, "No one who** *denies the Son* **has the Father. He who confesses the Son has the Father also." To "***deny the Son***" in this expression is equivalent to the expression "***does not abide in the doctrine of Christ***" in the**

other place.[66]

Ketcherside concludes:

> The instruction is "if any one comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into the house, or give him any greeting: for he who greets him shares his wicked work." The abuse of this passage by men motivated by a partisan spirit is indescribable in its awful effects; only eternity will reveal the tragic loss of souls caused by such abuse. It has been quoted to justify driving out into the cold those humble souls who could not bow to clerical domination; it is the whiplash that has cut into the hearts of sincere believers in the Lord who would not do abject obeisance to an arbitrary interpretation of some despotic and tyrannical faction. It is the sword that has spilled the blood of the saints, the axe that has wrecked the house of God; and the rude hand that has torn the fabric of fellowship into a hundred bits and flung the pieces into the face of the Christ of Calvary who died that we might be one in Him. Dear Lord, forgive us the sin of mistaking zeal for your kingdom with the blood lust of the sectarian spirit! Let us truly know your will![67]

While some have restricted "this doctrine" to refer only to specific teachings— those they regard as tests of fellowship— there is nothing in the context that would support such a restriction. "This doctrine" (v. 10) clearly refers to the "doctrine of Christ" (v. 9). If the doctrine referred to is not that of the incarnation of Christ, it is difficult to see how it could be restricted to anything other than the entire content of all that Jesus and his apostles taught— the new covenant scriptures in their entirety.

The idea that "this doctrine" refers to the entire content of all the new covenant scriptures would seem to be precluded by the fact that whatever "this doctrine" may be, it is of such a nature that teaching it must result in one's being rejected as a

Christian and barred from every social gathering, including that of the church. If it has reference to all that Jesus and his apostles taught, then every failure to understand perfectly the entire content of the new testament scriptures would result in such consequences. Every misinterpretation of any passage would require that the mistaken brother or sister be rejected as a saint. That, in turn, would require that those who reject the one who is mistaken must themselves have a perfect understanding of that and of every other passage in the new testament scriptures. Ignorance of the scriptures would be intolerable at every level, at any age.[68]

Other Relevant Topics

In his book *The Twisted Scriptures*, **Ketcherside also devotes entire chapters to: "Gospel and Doctrine," "Conformity or Diversity," "The One Faith," and "One Great Problem." In this last chapter, he states:**

> **It is the thesis of this book that opinions and doctrinal interpretations are occasions for differences, but never for division. It is no sin to differ, but it is a sin to divide.**[69]

He further explains:

> **Are there grounds upon which a community of saints can openly and publicly declare that one of their number will no longer be regarded as in their company? Laying aside the unscriptural expression "withdrawal of fellowship," what are the bases for the solemn terminal act of "delivering one unto Satan"? I believe there are three specifications upon which association can be declared no longer possible, and only three.**[70]

The three occasions Ketcherside identifies in scripture for excluding a brother or sister from the social company of the

local congregation are: (1) Denial of gospel facts, (2) moral turpitude, and (3) the factional spirit. He makes clear, however, that no one is to be rejected for an honest misunderstanding of the scriptures:

> **No honest opinion held by one who is in Christ Jesus is factional or heretical. No one who holds such an opinion is a subject of admonition from others. It is not their business. They can no more tell a man what he must think than they can tell him what kind of car to drive. To tell a man that he must give up his opinion, or that he must confess it is a sin to hold it, makes those who do so the sectarians, rather than the one who entertains the opinion or deduction. Opinions are private possessions and are not subject to trespass by others, not even preachers or elders.[71]**

To insist that one's doctrinal deductions be accepted by others in order for them to be accepted by God is, in Ketcherside's view— reflecting that of Thomas Campbell— to be a factionist and to reject the criteria set forth by the apostle Paul: "Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God" (Romans 15:7, KJV).

Conclusion

In the preceding overview of Carl Ketcherside's thinking on the implications of being under a covenant of grace rather than a covenant of law, we have attempted to provide evidence that his views were neither new nor revolutionary in the history of the Stone-Campbell restoration movement. Ketcherside was well-versed in the early literature of the movement and did not arrive at his conclusions in a vacuum.

Ketcherside was raised in the Sommerite sect of Churches of Christ, which was the first to declare non-fellowship over doctrinal deductions— contrary to the proposals of the

Campbells. His spiritual awakening in Belfast, Ireland, in 1951, prompted him to initiate a search for answers regarding how a unity movement of the early nineteenth century could have resulted in one of the most divided religious groups in America.

In 1963, writing under the theme of "Unity in the Spirit," Ketcherside published an essay titled "Terms of Communion." The following excerpt summarizes his thinking regarding the answers he began to seek in 1951. It is a lengthy excerpt but well worth reading in its entirety:

> **The development of orthodoxy, accompanied as it generally is, by a dogmatic attitude, has been the bane of all reformatory efforts in the realm of Christendom, through the centuries. When men discover certain truths, or what they consider to be truths, they begin to take those steps which they think are best adapted to preservation of those truths. The first step is to exalt such discoveries to the degree that it is assumed that only by holding correct views regarding them, can one sustain a vital relationship with God. Spiritual life is thus conditioned upon one's degree of attainment in knowledge upon the point at issue.**
>
> **The next step is to postulate that those who do not concur in the matter cannot be received into, or retained in the fellowship with those who hold the "correct" view, since it has been assumed that they are no longer in fellowship with God. This automatically develops a party, in the Christian framework, for the advocacy and defence of the discovery, and a new sect is born. All such sectarianism results from pride and fear, and from these twin evils most creedalism is born. We would not be so much concerned about such exhibitions of pride and fear, since most of us are proud of some things and afraid of others, but in this instance the whole Christian concept is at stake.**
>
> **The danger in all such creedalism lies in the fact that it creates another system of justification before God. It amounts to "setting up our own righteousness." It**

predicates our hope of salvation, not upon faith in Christ Jesus, but upon conformity and uniformity in knowledge. It actually dethrones Jesus, and while clamoring loudly that we respect his authority, it substitutes the authority of the party for his divine prerogative. It is the "official interpretation" and not the revelation of God which becomes the real criterion.

This poses certain questions. Did not the apostles mean to convey certain specific ideas when they wrote? If so, does not the person who grasps these ideas correctly, understand the apostolic doctrine? If so, should he not teach these things and demand that others subscribe to them? If these others do not concur in them, should he not mark and avoid them, and urge others who correctly understand to do the same? This is the reasoning which is the foundation of all that sectarianism which is promoted by honest men. *There is a difference between an honest and a dishonest sectarian promoter.* **The first strives to uphold the glory of God; the second is interested only in his own glory. The first is intellectually mistaken; the second is morally corrupt.**

There is a fallacy in this chain of reasoning which betrays good men into becoming *unwitting sectarians***. Certainly, the apostles meant to imply specific things when they wrote and the student who deduces the ideas they sought to convey, from the things they wrote, grasps the apostolic doctrine. Surely, he should teach what he understands the apostles to teach. But he "cannot demand that others subscribe to them." To do so would be to substitute his authority for that of Jesus. Others must arrive at these truths as he arrived at them, out of respect for Christ, and not out of respect for a human exponent of truth!**

No man has a right to bind *his knowledge* **of any point of apostolic doctrine upon any other person who does not so understand it. To believe a thing only because you have confidence in the judgment and wisdom of**

another man of superior intellect is to condition your faith upon the wisdom of men and not upon the power or authority of God. In the spiritual realm one is obligated to accept truth because of his relationship to God and not because of his relationship to men, regardless of how good and sincere they may be. The conscience is a sacred precinct reserved for God and no man has a right to invade the conscience of another and bind anything upon it which his own intellect cannot attest as truth. We must respect the consciences of others even while we deplore some of their ideas.

One who pledges allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ thereby obligates himself to respect and embrace all truth, and this obligation implies certain corollary obligations, among which are these: (1) To make a diligent search for truth; (2) To accept as truth those truths discovered as a result of such search; (3) To reject errors previously held and to correct one's thinking and behavior accordingly. In this process of acquisition we may help each other but no one can establish his own doctrinal knowledge as the measure of another man's acceptability with God. We differ in intellectual powers as much as we do in physical appearance. . . .

Our restoration ancestors clearly understood this, and while they were exceedingly zealous for the doctrine of God's Word, they never once thought of making proficiency in doctrine a criterion for fellowship in Christ. We commend unto all of our readers that portion of the "Declaration and Address" by Thomas Campbell, which contains the phrase which forms the heading for this article ["Terms of Communion"]. Read it frequently, carefully and meditatively. It contains the formula for overcoming almost every one of our current divisions, and also the means by which we can avoid all such in the future.

That although inferences and deductions from Scripture premises, when fairly inferred,

> **may be truly called the doctrine of God's holy word, yet are they not formally binding upon the consciences of Christians further than they perceive the connection, and evidently see that they are so, for their faith must not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power and veracity of God. Therefore, no such deductions can be made terms of communion, but properly do belong to the after and progressive edification of the church. Hence it is evident that no such deductions or inferential truths ought to have any place in the church's confession.**

Thomas Campbell was not so ignorant as to affirm that the inspired writings did not need to be interpreted. He knew that every communication in human language requires interpretation. When one reasons fairly (that is, by logical rules of interpretation) upon the premises in the sacred writings, the inferences or deductions thus arrived at constitute the apostolic teaching. Notice the expression "formally binding." This is the most important distinction in the paragraph. All truths contained in the revelation recorded by the apostles are *naturally* **binding upon every person under the lordship of Jesus, that is, they are obligatory because of** *the nature* **of that relationship. As one becomes convinced of them he must accept and implement them in his Christian walk or be responsible to the one Lord for his failure to do so. But no other person can formally bind them upon him as a condition of fellowship, because no one else can read his heart and determine the degree of his responsibility. . . .**

Since God has not made the arrival at a certain degree of doctrinal knowledge a condition of salvation, we have no right to make it a test of fellowship. Our brethren generally, in their growing sectarian arrogance and exclusivism, have made items belonging to "the after and progressive edification of the church" the "terms of communion" in their respective parties. One even has to believe "the right thing" about the millennium, or rather,

believe what "the right people" tell him about it, to be in what is called "the fellowship." Such persons have so forsaken the word of God and the restoration ideal that they would brand Thomas Campbell "a liberal."

Perhaps it was a growing tendency to make fellowship contingent upon doctrinal correctness and attainment of knowledge, which caused David Lipscomb to write in the *Gospel Advocate*, **April 22, 1875, as follows:**

> **"So long as a man really desires to do right, to serve the Lord, to obey His commands, we cannot withdraw from him. We are willing to accept him as a brother, no matter how ignorant he may be, or how far short of the perfect standard his life may fall from his ignorance . . . We will maintain the truth, press the truth upon him, compromise not one word or iota of that truth, yet forbear with the ignorance, the weakness of our brother who is anxious, but not yet able to see the truth . . . Why should I not, when I fall so far short of perfect knowledge myself? How do I know that the line beyond which ignorance damns, is behind me, not before me? If I have no forbearance with his ignorance, how can I expect God to forbear with mine? . . . So long then as a man exhibits a teachable disposition, is willing to hear, to learn and obey the truth of God, I care not how far he may be, how ignorant he is, I am willing to recognize him as a brother."**[72]

For Additional Study

The following is a list of articles by W. Carl Ketcherside that discuss the topic of the current chapter in greater detail. All of Ketcherside's essays are available in volumes 1 and 3 of the *e-book* series *The Works of W. Carl Ketcherside*, accessible on Amazon.com and archive.org.

- **"Thinking Out Loud."** *Integrity* **2 (July–August 1976): 26.**
- **"Thoughts on Fellowship, No. 6."** *Mission Messenger* **(June 1958): 1.**
- **"Grace and Faith."** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1959): 5.**
- **"The First Testament."** *Mission Messenger* **(July 1960): 1.**
- **"The New Covenant."** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1960): 1.**
- **"Another Gospel."** *Mission Messenger* **(January 1965): 1.**
- **"Contrary to the Doctrine."** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1965): 33.**
- **"Not of Faith."** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1965): 40.**
- **"Walking in the Light."** *Mission Messenger* **(May 1965): 65.**
- **"Receive Him Not."** *Mission Messenger* **(June 1965): 81.**
- **"Our Abiding Heritage."** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1965): 129.**
- **"Withdraw Yourselves."** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1965): 134.**
- **"Except They Be Agreed."** *Mission Messenger* **(November 1965): 161.**
- **"The Meaning of Grace."** *Mission Messenger* **(June 1967): 68.**
- **"Thinking Out Loud."** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1973): 129.**
- **"The Two Covenants."** *Ensign* **11 (December 1986): 203.**
- *The Death of the Custodian***. Cincinnati: New Life, 1976. Kindle ed. Stone-Campbell e-Prints, 2010.**

*See also***:**

- **Ketcherside, Jerry.** *The Contrast of the Covenants*. **2nd ed. Self-published, 2023.**

Chapter 7

PRINCIPLES OF RESTORATION

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Introduction

> **"I think it would not be quite honest with our readers if I did not tell you that it is my conviction that the system which constitutes Church-of-Christ-ism is the result of a degeneration of noble restoration principles into a narrow and sectarian framework." —W. Carl Ketcherside[1]**

As noted earlier, the overall objective of the mission and message of Carl Ketcherside was the restoration of the visible unity of all believers. For five years after his Belfast experience, Ketcherside engaged in a rigorous study of the writings of the fathers of the Stone-Campbell restoration movement. He was intent on discovering how a unity movement of the early 19th century, of which he was an heir, became one of the most divided religious movements in America in less than a century.

In order to show clearly that Ketcherside's message was largely a reflection of the conclusions of the pioneers of the movement, some familiarity with their writings is indispensable. As noted in the preface to this work, however, this task is made difficult by the fact that the style of English prose characteristic of those writings is no longer familiar to the modern reader.

While students of Restoration history may welcome the opportunity to examine original sources, others may not be as eager. For the latter, I have attempted to summarize and paraphrase the fathers to an extent that reading the primary sources may not be required to gain a clear understanding of their thinking. However, the original excerpts and related annotations are available in footnotes for those who may find them of interest.

Historical Development

At the turn of the nineteenth century, the Protestant

churches in America were deeply divided over *doctrinal differences* as set forth in their *creeds*. Church membership was contingent upon one's professed belief in the content of the creed — whether it was understood or not. Such demands for conformity extended to church policy, which was often unrelated to any specific biblical teaching, as was the case when Thomas Campbell allowed members of his denomination— who were not members of his party within the denomination— to share in the Lord's Supper in a location where the Supper was infrequently served.

Campbell began his ministry in America under the Associate (Seceder) Presbytery of Chartiers, Pennsylvania, on July 1, 1807.[2] Some four months later, on October 27, he was accused of heresy, and on February 12 of the following year, he was suspended by the Presbytery. His appeal to the high court of the Anti-Burgher Seceder Presbyterians, the Associate Synod of North America at Philadelphia, began on May 20. Seven days later, he submitted a letter of resignation, which he immediately retracted upon meeting with the Synod. But four months later, on September 13, he submitted another letter that he did not retract, in which he "declined their authority," thus signaling his formal and definitive separation from the Presbyterian Church. However, nearly two years passed before the Synod issued a formal letter of expulsion, dated April 18, 1810.[3]

Where the Bible Speaks

Upon withdrawing from the Seceder branch of the Presbyterian Church, Thomas Campbell continued to teach in private homes with those who were like-minded in their desire for peace and unity among the various sects divided by the doctrines contained in their creeds. During the summer of 1809, he called for a special meeting of those who had been attending his weekly discourses and who were in agreement with the principles he taught (although many were still members of the

Presbyterian church).

The meeting, to be held at the house of Abraham Altars, had been called to better define the goals of the efforts in which they had been cooperating without formal organization.[4] It was at this meeting that Campbell pronounced what came to be regarded as the watchword of the movement: "*Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; and where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent.***"[5] Regarding the introduction of this principle, Robert Richardson later reported:**

> **Upon this announcement, a solemn silence pervaded the assembly. Never before had religious duty been presented to them in so simple a form.** *Never before* **had the great principle on which this religious enterprise rested been so clearly presented to their minds.[6]**

The significance of this historical footnote, by the most reliable of Campbell interpreters, may not immediately be apparent. However, had the audience perceived Campbell to be calling *only* **for a return to scripture alone, they would not have found it remarkable, since many such pleas had been made since the days of the Protestant Reformation.[7] Furthermore, to characterize such a misperception of Campbell's maxim as religious duty "never before . . . presented . . . in so simple a form" would amount to gross exaggeration.**

Whether Richardson misread the reaction of those assembled for that event or simply projected onto them his own impression, it is clear that, for him, something unique and profoundly insightful had just been proposed. He further observes:

> **It was from the moment when these significant words were uttered and accepted that the more intelligent ever afterward dated the** *formal and actual commencement of the Reformation***, which was subsequently carried on with so much success . . . .[8]**

In Campbell's dictum, Richardson perceived a uniqueness that was not entirely clear to everyone at the moment it was spoken. In fact, at this point, not even Campbell himself understood all that his maxim implied.[9] So much remained to be tested by the maxim that, some thirty years later, Alexander Campbell, in the preface to what is perhaps the most popular of his works, *The Christian System*, **acknowledged their initial apprehensiveness:**

> **We were not, indeed, at first apprised of the havoc which our** *principles* **would make upon our** *opinions*. **We soon, however, found our principles and opinions at war on some points; and the question immediately arose,** *Whether shall we sacrifice our principles to our opinions, or our opinions to our principles?* **We need not say that we were compelled to the latter; judging that our principles were better than our opinions. Hence, since we put to sea on board this bottom, we have been compelled to throw overboard some opinions once as dear to us as they now are to those who never thought of the difference between principle and opinion.[10]**

By September 1809, Thomas Campbell was prepared to state in greater detail what his new maxim entailed. Those specifications were set forth in a document delivered to the Washington Association, in the house of Jacob Donaldson, and soon afterward published under the title *Declaration and Address*.

In this elaboration of what it means to speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where it is silent, Campbell first drew attention to the fact that true Christians are inherently united. That unity exists as the result of their sharing in common the Spirit of God, making them *essentially*, *constitutionally*, **and** *intentionally* **one. In light of this reality, it was to be lamented that those who were** *essentially* **united were not** *visibly* **so. Consequently, it was to the visible unity of the church that Campbell devoted his attention in what has been called his**

Magna Carta **on Christian unity.**

According to Campbell, visible unity was to manifest itself through a uniform affirmation of the text of scripture. To speak *where* **the Bible speaks required that one speak** *as* **the Bible speaks— to repeat the very words of scripture. In so doing, all would speak the same things** *while differing in their understanding of what they spoke***.**

The *only alternative* **to speaking the literal words of scripture would be to speak according to one's understanding of what the Bible means by what it says. Yet this was precisely what Campbell's dictum was designed to correct. To speak according to one's understanding, or the understanding of the leaders of the church, and to bind that understanding upon others as a condition of fellowship was the essence of creedalism, which Campbell identified as the source of the divisions of his day.**

Declaration and Address

Although Thomas Campbell never used the word "ancient" in his *Declaration and Address***, he did propose that all Christians conform to "the** *model* **and adopt the practice of the primitive Church, expressly exhibited in the New Testament."[11] Furthermore, he asked,**

> **Who, then, would not be the first among us to give up human inventions in the worship of God, and to cease from imposing his private opinions upon his brethren, that our breaches might** *thus* **be healed? Who would not willingly conform to the original** *pattern laid down in the New Testament***, for** *this* **happy purpose? Our dear brethren of all denominations will please to consider that we have our educational prejudices and particular customs to struggle against as well as they.[12]**

While Campbell does not describe in any detail the "model" or New Testament "pattern" to which he refers, he does specify that it consists of "universally acknowledged and self-evident truths".[13] The "cause that we advocate," he says, is "the cause of Christ and our brethren of all denominations,"[14] the recovery of "that original unity, peace, and purity"[15] that belong to the constitution of the Church of Christ.

The recovery of the original unity of the church, Campbell states, is to be accomplished by "an entire union of all the Churches in faith and practice,"[16] contending earnestly "for the sacred articles of faith and duty once delivered to the saints,"[17] and standing "with evidence upon the same ground on which the Church stood at the beginning."[18] To the extent that this is accomplished, "just in the same degree is the glory of God and the happiness of men promoted and secured."[19]

With regard to the terms for recognizing others as Christians, however, Thomas Campbell was quite specific: "Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God" (Romans 15:7). *Just as Christ received each of us*, **upon faith, repentance, and baptism— with all our imperfections in knowledge and conduct—** *so* **[on that same basis]** *are we to receive others***— imposing no other condition for acceptance than that required of us by Christ to enter into fellowship with him.**

Campbell was also specific about what his proposals were *not* **designed to do: they were** *not to be used as tests of spiritual fellowship,* **that is, to determine one's acceptability to God. Prior to presenting his thirteen propositions for visible unity, Campbell issues the following disclaimer:**

> **Let none imagine that the subjoined propositions are at all intended as an overture toward a new creed or standard for the Church, or as in any wise designed to be made a term of communion;** *nothing can be further from our intention***.[20]**

It is noteworthy that Campbell did not propose the *addition* of anything *new* but rather what was already accepted and practiced by Protestant denominations of his day. In the "Appendix" to his *Declaration and Address*, written to "prevent mistakes" regarding his intentions, Campbell insisted:

> **First, then, we beg leave to assure our brethren that we have no intention to interfere, either directly or indirectly, with the peace and order of the settled Churches, . . . We have no nostrum, no peculiar discovery of our own to propose to fellow-Christians, for the fancied importance of which they should become followers of us. We propose to patronize nothing but the inculcation of the *express word* of God, either as to matter of faith or practice; but every one that has a Bible, and can read it, can read this for himself. Therefore, we have nothing new.[21]**

What Campbell *did* propose was the *rejection* of everything for which a *literal* "thus saith the Lord" could not be found in the new covenant scriptures. By that rejection, all doctrinal deductions and inferences from scripture were eliminated as tests of fellowship— although not from the edification of the church.[22]

Late in 1832, an article by "T. W." (a pen name for Thomas Campbell) appeared in the *Harbinger* under the significant title "A Word to the Disciples of the Ancient Gospel, in behalf of the Reformation, and for the consideration of Opponents." After summarizing his original unity proposal, Campbell observes that what the reformers were proposing was that the ancient gospel and law of Christ be preached as it is "*expressly recorded in the New Testament.*"

When his opponents replied, "All professions say so," Campbell clarifies that by adhering to what is "expressly recorded in the New Testament," they were rejecting theological explanations and interpretations as "articles of faith and terms

of communion." It was the practice of regarding such interpretations as terms of fellowship that he objected to.

This raised a follow-up objection: "But may not inferences and opinions, formed by just reasoning, be as true as the text? and, if so, ought they not to be received as of equal authority?" To this, Campbell replies with an emphatic no. He then provides four reasons for his response:

First, it is not God's will to make such propositions a part of his religion; rather, he requires only "what is expressly recorded as such." Secondly, "It is not the will of Christ to make every inference that may be deduced from scripture a part of his religion." Thirdly, such inferences and opinions are the result of *human* **reasoning, and, therefore, of human authority. Only divine testimony— "his** *express* **authority, and that alone" has the weight of** *divine* **authority. Fourthly, if all human inferences that could be made from the scriptures were made a part of the Christian religion, who could justly be entitled to the name** *Christian***?**

Furthermore, Campbell continues, "How can two walk together except they be agreed," unless they simply be agreed to walk together? On the contrary, if it is required that two people agree on everything in order to walk together, "where shall we find the two that can walk together?" If it be objected that they need only be agreed on the essential character of Christianity, how shall we determine what that is? Does not every sect regard what they require for fellowship to be "essential?" Yet they do not agree with each other as to what is essential!

Clearly, that which distinguished one sect from another was its position on doctrine— expositions, inferences, and opinions— set forth in their creeds. The creeds not only interpreted the scriptures for their adherents; they also stated what the composers believed to be the inferred injunctions contained therein.[23]

Furthermore, to be in communion with a Protestant church at the turn of the nineteenth century, one was required to accept the creed as authoritative for all matters of faith and doctrine as a condition for fellowship— regardless of the degree to which the creed was understood.[24]

Finally, it is noteworthy that in "Confessions of Faith," Alexander Campbell points to the nature of Christian doctrine by renaming such documents as "confessions of opinion." Faith, he says, is belief in testimony, either human or divine. Opinion, in contrast, is "the notions, judgment or view which the mind forms of anything." Regarding the testimony given in scripture concerning Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah, he writes:

> **"All things testified of him are articles or items of belief; and all views, judgments, or notions formed of the things testified, are matters of opinion. Now all the abstract views of God and man, of things present and future, with which these confessions are replete, are matters of opinion; and as the general character of these books should fix upon them their name, they should be styled Confessions of Opinions. To speak philosophically, I** *believe* **what is testified, I** *know* **what I have observed or experienced, and** *I am of opinion* **in all things speculative. . . . I** *believe* **that Jesus Christ died for our sins, I** *know* **that the sun gives us light, and** *I am of opinion* **that all infants dying shall be saved."**[25]

It bears repeating that during the early days of the movement, doctrinal deductions, explanations, and inferences or interpretations, were not to have the authority of that which is "expressly recorded," that is, the *precise text of scripture*.[26] **Neither were they to be regarded as tests of fellowship. To** *become* **a Christian, one need only comply with the terms of the gospel. To** *remain* **a Christian, one need only continue to affirm, through his conversation and conduct, that by which he** *became* **a Christian— his profession that Jesus is the Christ and sovereign over all things— doctrinal convictions**

notwithstanding.[27]

Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things

In his *Declaration and Address* Thomas Campbell set forth the principles implicit in his earlier dictum. It was a philosophical explanation of what is entailed in speaking as the scriptures speak. Alexander Campbell, in a similar fashion, specified in his "ancient gospel" and "ancient order of things," the beliefs and practices that were consistent with the principles contained in his father's *Declaration and Address*.

While Thomas Campbell continued to have a strong influence on the movement throughout his lifetime, it was Alexander who became its chief promoter and articulator. However, nearly seventeen years passed before his concept of what his father had set in motion began to mature.

In a field report published in the *Christian Baptist* for January for 1825, Alexander appears to have used the term "the ancient order of things" for the first time.[28] The following month, he published the first in a series of 32 essays on "A Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things," which ran through September of 1829.[29]

Campbell appears to have used the term "the ancient gospel" for the first time in June 1827.[30] Seven months later, in January 1828, he published the first in a series of ten essays on "The Ancient Gospel," the final installment appearing in November of the same year.[31] By that time, he had already preached his "Sermon on the Law" (1816) and held two debates on baptism, one with Walker (1820) and the other with MacCalla (1823).

Campbell does not provide an itemized list of the components of the "ancient order." However, a comparison of

his essays on *A Restoration of the Ancient Order* **with those of Richardson on** *The Principles and Objects of the Religious Reformation, Urged by A. Campbell and Others* **makes it clear that the "order" was confined to the express precepts and apostolic examples regarding the social worship of the church and its governance.**[32]

While Richardson's explanation of the content of the ancient order is similar to that of Campbell, he more specifically than Campbell calls attention to the fact that Christianity is *personal;* **and not** *doctrinal***:**

> **But we differ from all the parties here in one important particular, to which I wish to call your special attention. It is this: that while they suppose this Christian faith to be** *doctrinal***, we regard it as** *personal***. In other words, they suppose doctrines, or religious tenets, to be the subject-matter of this faith; we, on the contrary, conceive it to terminate on a person—** *the Lord Jesus Christ himself***.**[33]

While other important topics related to the goal of restoration were addressed by Campbell and Richardson, conspicuous by their *absence* **from the ancient order were matters of** *doctrine***.**

In Matters of Faith, Unity.

Among heirs of the Stone-Campbell restoration movement, one of the most frequently quoted maxims is one that seems never to have been cited by any of the principal fathers of the movement, such as the Campbells, Robert Richardson, or Barton W. Stone. Of the several versions of the maxim, the most common among heirs of the Restoration Movement, appears to be: "In matters of faith, unity; in matters of opinion, liberty; in all things, charity."[34]

Having no precedent in the earliest documents of the Restoration Movement, the meaning of the slogan has been defined over the years in various ways by the heirs of the movement. For example, at least five times throughout 1908, the *Christian-Evangelist* featured "A Symposium" titled "In Faith, Unity: In Opinion, Liberty," to which better-known professionals were invited to submit their views, although the symposium was open to all. It may be clearly observed from the comments contributed, that even at this late date— one hundred years after the beginning of the movement— there was still confusion among its heirs about the distinction to be made between matters of faith and matters of opinion.[35]

Only seven years before his death, Alexander Campbell, in a series of articles about "Untaught Questions," found it necessary to explain once again the difference between faith and opinion. He observes that from the earliest days of the movement, it was clear that religious divisions were not due to what the text of scripture *says* but to what humans have interpreted it to *mean*. While the text of scripture is of divine authority, human reasoning or interpretation is not. For that reason, it should not be used as the basis for Christian fellowship or to determine whether a congregation is faithful.[36]

Accordingly, faith consists in belief in the facts of the gospel and an appropriate response to express precepts associated with those facts. Testimony regarding facts, as Campbell points out, is either believed or rejected based on available evidence:

> **Faith, abstract from facts, produces no substantial, no real effect. . . . No person can help believing when the evidence of truth arrests his attention. And without evidence, it is as impossible to believe, as to bring something out of nothing.[37]**

Since faith naturally occurs in an honest heart when presented with credible evidence, it is clearly a suitable basis for unity among people of diverse reasoning abilities. In contrast,

propositional truth can be grasped only by one who, through adequate preparation and disposition, has the ability to discern its true meaning.

In his *Declaration and Address* of 1809, Thomas Campbell stated that Christian doctrine should never become a test of fellowship— unless admission to fellowship is limited only to those who have a high degree of doctrinal understanding. The fact is, however, that from the beginning, the family of God has always consisted of little children, young men, and old men.[38]

Thirty years later, Alexander Campbell also called attention to the fact that the diverse composition of the Christian community prevents it from achieving simultaneous agreement in matters of controversy— just as in matters of civil law. Any institution that demands uniformity of thinking among its members is defective in its reasoning, seeing that this has seldom, if ever, been accomplished.[39]

In 1843, while defending his position against an opponent in debate, Alexander Campbell observed that in disputation, one argument may appeal to one mind but not to another. Since *no two minds think alike*, we must approach human understanding by various avenues in order to convince the listener of the truthfulness of our position.[40]

In 1848, Robert Richardson observed the absurdity of expecting uniformity of opinion in a world where societies and people are never identical in any aspect:

> **But how preposterous it is to expect uniformity of opinion in a world like this, where the minds of men are as diverse as the leaves of the forest!— a world in which no two states can have the same political government; no two families the same regulations; no two individuals the same tastes and habits!"[41]**

Finally, in 1852, Richardson concluded that we might as

well expect the face of every individual to be identical as to expect that men will agree in everything. This, he says, is why we must always be free to express an opinion about what the scriptures mean, in our view, without others making their doctrinal views the standard for fellowship.[42]

According to the Campbells, truth revealed in scripture, conveyed in translations of the exact words used by the Holy Spirit, is to be accepted as such by faith. However, doctrinal deductions regarding the meaning of that truth may not be imposed upon others as tests of fellowship, since such deductions always depend upon fallible human reasoning. To the extent that they are correctly understood, they constitute "the doctrine of God's holy word" and are useful for the edification of the church, but not for determining who is a part of the church.

Consequently, even correct doctrinal interpretations are never to be bound upon the consciences of those who are so deficient in their reasoning ability that they are unable to see that they are correct. A brother does not consist in the acuity of his intellect— his level of knowledge or understanding does not determine whether he is my Christian brother. Evidence for this conclusion may be observed in the fact that, since the earliest days of the movement, one could hold Calvinist or Arminian views and still be received into the church on the condition that both affirmed every statement in scripture pertaining to both the security and the possible apostasy of the believer.

To Summarize— **In the second installment of "A Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things," Alexander Campbell observed that creeds (formal statements of doctrine) are composed of inferences of human understanding and are, consequently, imperfect. Often, sincere people try their best to explain scripture but come to contradictory conclusions about its meaning. This is attributable to differences in education, ways of thinking and reasoning, different degrees of information, different prejudices, and especially to inequities in human**

intellect.

Consequently, human creeds (doctrinal beliefs) should always remain private property— not something to be accepted as having the authority of scripture itself. They can never be used as a basis for unity since Christians have never shared the same level of understanding of scripture. To require that such human interpretations be uniformly adopted is as irrational as requiring that all people have the same physical features. Such uniformity of thinking has never existed, and never will.[43]

What Campbell says regarding creeds would apply equally to those controversial doctrines over which the heirs of the movement are so uniformly divided.

Thomas Campbell proposed that obedience to the gospel, upon which one is received by Christ, should be the only determining factor in whether one was to be regarded as being in the fellowship. He supported his proposal with Paul's statement in Romans 15:7, that we should receive one another *just as* Christ has received us— with our ignorance and spiritual immaturity. Campbell went on to propose that inferences and deductions from scripture premises— which he subsequently identifies as doctrinal interpretations of scripture— are not to be bound upon those who cannot see them as consistent with their understanding of scripture. No such inferential truths or human deductions can be made terms of communion and ought to have no place in the church's confession.[44]

In 1829, Thomas Campbell wrote an article titled "To the Editor of the Christian Baptist," in which he urged the necessity of "a strict and undeviating practical use of the holy scriptures in the inculcation of every item of faith and obedience."[45] It becomes clear, however, that his concern is to show that the broken unity of the Christian profession is attributable directly to human opinions or propositions "in words suggested by human wisdom, instead of divine declarations *in divine terms*"

given by the Holy Spirit. Such a departure, he insists, must be corrected if the problem of division is to be resolved. But he asks, what shall be done? Shall preaching and teaching cease? By no means, he asserts. So, what is the solution? He responds:

> **All that is necessary, in the mean time, is to make the proper distinction respecting the subject matter of *preaching* and *teaching*. The primitive preachers preached the gospel and taught the law of Christ.[46]**

It should be observed that, in the thinking of the Campbells, the gospel was *preached* to men to make them Christians, whereas "the law of Christ" was *taught* to Christians to make them better men. That law, he explains in a second letter to the editor, was the law of the primitive church, which, before any other letter of the New Covenant had been written, was in no way deficient. "Its law was gratitude, piety, and love, the law of the New Covenant in the heart."[47]

Sixteen years later, Thomas Campbell wrote a letter to a brother who was soon to embark on an evangelistic tour. In it, Campbell reminds him of what was earlier proposed in his *Declaration and Address*— that the reformers speak what is expressly revealed in scripture so that controversy might die a natural death. He further notes that faith and duty consist in obedience to the gospel and the law of Christ— not in human deductions from scripture, which can have no part of our religion. Therefore, we simply ignore them, unless they deny or corrupt the text of scripture. In the meantime, he says, we carefully maintain "the plain systematic distinction between preaching and teaching"— preaching being for sinners, while teaching is for the edification of the saints.[48]

The Campbells taught that one who is obedient to the gospel has been received by Christ, in spite of ignorance and spiritual immaturity, and ought to be received by all of God's other children— upon that same basis. A declaration of "non-fellowship," as it was then referred to, with one who had been so

received by Christ could be scripturally justified *only* in the event that one should act in such a way as to deny his profession of faith— either through moral turpitude, denying the text of scripture, or through divisiveness. No doctrinal position— not Calvinism, Arminianism, Universalism, nor Destructionism— was ever to be considered a test of fellowship. But to insist that one's position in such matters be considered a determinant of Christian fellowship, was to be regarded as the sin of heresy or divisiveness, and its advocate was to be admonished for his sin and turned away from should he fail to repent.

When responding to questions about a congregation that experienced division, Alexander Campbell wrote:

> **What, let me ask, caused the new converts by Mr. Allen and his associates to eject the old disciples? Was it *immorality*? No allegation of the sort. Was it *impiety*? No such insinuation. Was it *denying the Lord*, or *any institution* of the Lord's? No one imagines it. Was it for *making a faction* to an opinion of their own?[49]**

In the above response, Campbell lists the only three scriptural reasons for which one might be the subject of congregational discipline. It is, again, noteworthy that one's doctrinal interpretations were not included in the list.

By doctrinal interpretations, Campbell always refers to those things that are neither facts nor express commands or examples. Those conclusions that rely on human reasoning, or multiple scriptures bound together by human logic to produce a seemingly logical deduction, are always regarded as opinions. They constitute one's best judgment as to what the scriptures mean by what they say but are not to be bound upon others.

The Doctrine of Christ

Since the late nineteenth century, the principles of the

Stone-Campbell restoration movement have been subverted through a misinterpretation of the words of the apostle John:

> **For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the *doctrine of Christ*, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds. (2 John 7-11, KJV; *italics added*).**

The argument is usually made that the "doctrine of Christ" refers to all that Christ taught, including all that he authorized and inspired his apostles to teach. Consequently, it is concluded that the term "doctrine of Christ" refers to the entire content of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament.

The doctrinal deductions of one who interprets 2 John 9–10 in this way are *for him* the "doctrine of Christ." Such a view, when held consistently, absolutely prohibits him from receiving into his home *anyone* who fails to agree with *any* of his doctrinal views about *anything* contained in the New Testament scriptures — lest he personally become guilty of practicing the "evil deed" of approving another's imperfect understanding of some aspect of scripture.

While the above argument borders on the absurd— and stands in clear contradiction to 1 Corinthians 8:2— it is not hypothetical, as may be seen in an event quoted by David Lipscomb in the *Gospel Advocate* in 1879:

> **We once knew a Cumberland preacher, a good earnest man, an honest and faithful but strongly prejudiced man, who turned a preacher of the gospel off**

from his house. He was a hospitable and kind-hearted man. The preacher came to his house a stranger, on a cold, rainy evening, asked for lodging for the night. It was cheerfully granted. After supper they began to talk, and toward bed time he found the preacher was a "Campbellite." He had his horse caught, and told him he could not entertain the teacher of such a heresy under his roof. It would be bidding him God-speed. So he had at that late hour of night, in cold and rain to seek other shelter. This occurred about the time we were born. Our Cumberland preacher and Bro. A. B.'s brother understood this passage alike, and so acted.

> **We are satisfied they were both wrong, and acted wrong under this false impression. . . . The specific sin here spoken of was a denial that Christ had come in the flesh, or a denial that Jesus was the Christ. But it strikes us that the person here described was one who, while claiming to be a Christian was disputing apostolic authority, and denying the foundation truth of the religion of Christ. Our friends among the sects we do not think are of this class. We think they are honestly mistaken. They have a zeal of God not according to knowledge. . . .[50]**

In 1856, Robert Richardson began a series of essays on the "Nature of Christian Doctrine," which he introduces by noting "a very unfortunate error of the religious world," namely, the supposition that *doctrine* is the object of Christian faith, when, he says, "in reality Christ is that object." The effect of this error is in "making the Christian faith doctrinal, when, in fact, it is personal." True Christian faith, according to the express language of scripture is simply "*belief in Christ— a trusting in Christ*, and has nothing to do with the reception of doctrinal tenets, such as are propounded in Protestant creeds."[51]

In the second of that series, Richardson observes that for the early Christians, the "doctrine of Christ" was to "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." Even when the word

"doctrine" was used by an apostle, it referred to matters of practical conduct, not to articles of belief— as was the case when John warned of one who *abides not in the doctrine of Christ*. It was of his "deeds" they were not to partake.[52]

In the former essay, Richardson had observed that his reference to "doctrine" was to be understood with respect to what are usually referred to as "religious tenets." While a doctrine, in the strictest sense of the word, is merely a teaching, in the theological sense— which is the popular sense— both "doctrine" and "doctrines" indicate the tenets of a particular religious system or some abstract dogma directed to the intellectual part of our nature. These are speculative views arranged as systems of religious ideas.[53]

Although Richardson referred to the practice of requiring assent to the *tenets* of a creed before one *becomes* a Christian, his observations are valid for heirs of the Restoration Movement who simply reverse the order— one *becomes* a Christian upon obedience to the gospel, whereupon he is presented with a list of doctrinal *tenets* that must be adopted if he is to *remain* a Christian. Of such, Richardson notes that the Protestant mind has been trained to believe that "the saving efficacy of religion depends upon the accuracy of our views of it." Consequently, it has become so engrossed with doctrinal controversies that, rather than having a simple view of Christianity, it has reduced Christianity to a matter of systematic theology.[54]

Richardson then summarizes by pointing to two great errors against which he was contending: (1) supposing Christianity to be doctrinal when it is personal, and (2) the idea that Christian doctrine was designed to make men *think right* rather than *do right*. These two errors, says Richardson, have rendered the faith and practice of religion doctrinal and sectarian. Rather than being works of faith and labors of love, they are efforts to serve sectarian interests, struggles for power, conflicts of opinionism, bigotry, and pride. But such is not the

purpose of Christianity, whose truths and facts are designed not for theoretical but for practical use— intended to have an impact upon the heart and life of the Christian, producing a life of good works.[55]

Had the restoration fathers regarded doctrinal deductions as conditions for fellowship— and, thereby, conditions for salvation— they would have been disingenuous to proclaim salvation upon obedience to the ancient gospel. Thomas Campbell's premise, that all who had obeyed the gospel had been accepted by Christ and should be accepted by one another, would not have been entirely true, nor would it have served as a basis for the essential unity of the church. Honesty on the part of the restoration fathers would have required *full* disclosure prior to baptism, making the candidate aware of *all conditions upon which salvation is contingent*. It would be the right of the candidate to know in advance that there is more to be believed than what is contained in the simple confession of the Ethiopian eunuch.

It should be observed from the above that the earliest fathers of the movement never used the term "doctrine of Christ" to refer to the entire content of the New Testament scriptures. Rather, they used it to refer to that in which one's ultimate trust or reliance had been placed. The doctrine of Christ, in their view, is designed to nourish the soul, not educate the mind— not to make men *think* right, but to make them *do* right. It was a measure of conduct, not of orthodoxy.

Creeds and the Right of Private Judgment in Doctrine

Since the Reformation of the sixteenth century, Protestants have claimed the right to private judgment in the interpretation of scripture. Prior to that time, the magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church dictated what each member was to believe, based on its interpretation of scripture and the tradition of the

church. The authority of scripture alone and the right of every believer to interpret scripture according to conscience, were declarations of the Reformation, designed as correctives to the role usurped by the magisterium.

However, allowing each individual to become an interpreter of scripture would, in practice, *prevent* the visible unity of all believers. As F. D. Kershner wrote in his preface to the Bethany Press edition of the *Declaration and Address*:

> **When Roman Catholics disagreed, they could always refer the matter to the Pope for final settlement. When Protestants disagreed as to the meaning of the Scriptures, they at first insisted that every man could interpret the text to suit himself. Later they discovered that this led to practical anarchy since it amounted to every man having his own individual church. They resorted, therefore, to the writing of creeds as a means of interpreting the Scriptures which gave a certain limited unity to the group accepting each particular creed but which led to even greater disunity between the parties or denominations which followed the diverse creedal statements.[56]**

Furthermore, a diversity of interpretation would conflict with the idea that doctrinal correctness was considered an indicator of fidelity to Christ. Consequently, Protestant leaders composed creeds or confessions of faith that contained the doctrines to which, in their view, the assent of all Christians should be required.

Requiring adherence to a creed, however, had the effect of vacating the right of private judgment. As a result, the creeds of Protestantism replaced the magisterium of Catholicism. And while Catholics could lay claim to visible unity in their adherence to the teaching of the magisterium, Protestants were hopelessly divided by their creeds.

The Campbells objected to creeds for at least three reasons, none of which was related to the veracity of their doctrinal content— although they agreed with a great deal of what the creeds contained.

1. They objected to the fact that the creeds gave practical— although unauthorized— authority to the clergy, which was often abused.

Richardson states that Thomas Campbell and those who had associated with him, had determined "to induce the different religious denominations to unite together upon the Bible as their only rule of faith and practice." However, he adds:

> **Mr. Campbell entertained and offered no special objections to their confessions of faith or formularies of doctrine. There was scarcely anything in the Westminster Confession of Faith from which he himself felt inclined to dissent, except it was the chapter which gave to the clergy a position and an authority which he thought unauthorized, and which, as he had found by experience, could be readily abused.[57]**

2. They objected to the fact that understanding the creeds required a level of comprehension that was often beyond the grasp of the average adherent.

In his essay, "The Foundation of Hope and of Christian Union," Alexander Campbell wrote:

> **It must strike every man of reflection, that a religion requiring much mental abstraction or exquisite refinement of thought, that calls for the comprehension or even apprehension of refined distinctions and of nice subtleties, is a religion not suited to mankind in their present circumstances. To present such a creed as the Westminster, as adopted either by Baptist or Paido-Baptists; such a creed as the Episcopalian, or, in fact, any sectarian creed, composed, as they all are, of propositions,**

> **deduced by logical inferences, and couched in philosophical language, to all those who are fit subjects of the salvation of Heaven— I say, to present such a creed to such for their examination or adoption, shocks all common sense.**[58]

3. They objected to the fact that denominational creeds were always imposed *as conditions for Christian fellowship.* **However, such an imposition contravened the individual right of private judgment in the interpretation of scripture, forcing the opinions of a few upon the consciences of many.**

Two Principles of the Restoration

As a corrective to attempts to achieve unity through creeds, Thomas Campbell proposed that the visible unity of all Christians in all the Protestant sects be be founded on the basis of two principles originating in the Reformation:

1. The acceptance of the *precise words of scripture* **as the sole basis for matters of faith would ensure the** *visible* **unity of all Christians, as they would all be speaking the same thing.**

2. Pursuant to the right of private judgment, each individual's interpretation of scripture was to be regarded as a *matter of opinion***— about which there was to be** *liberty***.**

In the opening line of the seventeenth installment of "A Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things," Alexander Campbell asserts that "*If all Christians 'spoke the same things' they would doubtless be of the same mind***." While the causality of speaking upon thinking might be speculative, from a philosophical standpoint, one must have something to think about, and that which he thinks about must assume the form of words, to facilitate thought. Campbell concludes that** *speaking* **the same things is more likely to cause** *thinking* **the same things— a proposition he suggests is scriptural and rational.**

Campbell goes on to suggest that speaking only what the scripture itself speaks may be the only practicable means of uniting all the Christians in the world. This cannot be achieved, however, if we add to or subtract from the words used by the Holy Spirit. Taking them out of context or confounding them with terms not found in scripture— mingling the words of scripture with human contrivances— *constitutes the sole cause of disunity among followers of Christ***. Until all Christians speak the same things, visible unity remains unattainable. "Unity can never be obtained while any other creed than the sacred writings is known or regarded." Campbell's reference to the Bible as our "creed" does not refer to interpretations of the Bible, rather to its explicit text. Yet such unity can never be realized "until** *pure speech* **be restored."**[59]

Campbell held that speaking *as* **the Bible speaks was something of great consequence. In fact, he considered it the only practicable and "sufficient means of reconciling all the Christian world, and of destroying all partyism and party feelings." If all Christians were to speak (not explain) the same things— the very words of scripture— they would, in Campbell's view, be visibly one.**

In a similar vein, Richardson observes that the distinction between faith and doctrinal interpretations lies at the very threshold of Campbell's religious reformation. Yet, he notes, this distinction is "*everywhere confounded***." He clarifies that faith is based on the** *declarations* **of scripture, whereas** *opinions* **are human interpretations or explanations of the** *meaning* **of scripture— doctrinal deductions. For this reason, the use of scripture's precise words is imperative:**

> **Where the Bible speaks, there is no place for any opinion; and if any one hold a view which contravenes any declaration of Holy Writ, this is not an opinion, but actual** *disbelief* **of so much of the Word of God as is thus contradicted and opposed. In entire harmony with these views, it is regarded as of the utmost practical importance**

> **to speak always of religious matters** *in the exact language of the Bible*.[60]

Richardson's reference to "the exact language of the Bible" distinguishes Thomas Campbell's call for unity in matters of faith from a generic call for unity based on scripture alone— which inevitably becomes a unity based on what men think the Bible means— and further clarifies his understanding of what it means to "speak where the Bible speaks."

Richardson goes on to lament that opinions have been granted the same authority as scripture, as if the scriptures were "so deficient in clearness, as to require additions and explanations from uninspired and fallible men in order to render them intelligible and complete." He continues:

> **The question, accordingly, is no longer, "What say the Scriptures?" "How readest thou?" "What hath the Lord spoken?" but,** *What do the Scriptures mean*?[61]

In other words, what scripture explicitly *says* **is a matter of** *faith*. **What men say it** *means* **is a matter of** *opinion*.

Richardson maintained that there is a basis for union that also preserves an individual's liberty to interpret scripture according to conscience. He believed that a solution to the problem Protestants had faced since the time of the Reformation — of how to reconcile the two great truths of *unity of faith* **and** *liberty of private judgment*— **had been found "in the principles of the present reformation."**

> **Through the whole progress of this religious movement, it has ever been maintained, that sects and parties are the great obstacles to the ultimate triumphs of the gospel, and that there is a basis of union upon which all true believers may be united as one body, while, at the same time, there need be no retrenchment of Christian liberty.**

> **In short, it has been the great design to urge the importance of the two great truths which we have now under consideration, that there should be *unity of faith*, and at the same time *liberty of private judgment*. To reconcile these is a problem which Protestants have been endeavoring to solve for the last 300 years. It is believed that in the principles of the present reformation its solution has been found.[62]**

Here Richardson's perception of the uniqueness of Thomas Campbell's dictum, "*Where the Scriptures speak, we speak"* is most clearly seen.

In the same essay, Richardson affirms that while the movement's founders valued doctrinal purity, the visible unity of believers must be based on the truth of the *gospel*, not *doctrine* — which has caused so many divisions. The only way to ensure doctrinal purity is by adopting the scriptures— the text of scripture— "as the only source of religious knowledge." It is in advocating unity based on the truth of the gospel rather than doctrine, while ensuring scriptural liberty in the interpretation of scripture, "that the present reformation has sought to restore to the church, the true foundation laid by Christ and the Apostles."[63]

By "adopting the scriptures" as a basis of union, Richardson refers to the adoption of the text— *the very words of* — scripture. In doing so, the right to private judgment is preserved. On the other hand, if he means adopting *our* interpretation of scripture as the basis of union, then his proposal would be no different from the sectarian practice that the restoration principle was meant to counter and correct.

Creeds are simply *interpretations of scripture,* prepackaged by an elite and imposed on others as tests of fellowship. Divisions arise from different *interpretations of scripture*— whether published in a document like the *Gospel Advocate* or *Gospel Guardian*, or in a *Lectureship* or a *Creed*.

In clear contrast to creedalism, the restoration principle was designed to *circumvent differences of interpretation*— the primary cause of division— and base visible unity on one's belief, appropriate response to the facts of the gospel, and an affirmation of *the text of scripture* alone. Through obedience to the gospel all are accepted by Christ; through affirming the text of scripture alone, all can be of the same mind and speak the same things.

Creeds: Written or Nuncupative.

Given the nature of creeds, it follows that what the fathers of the Restoration Movement wrote about them applies equally to doctrinal interpretations (or "opinions"), as they are essentially the same. Consequently, analyzing their views of creeds should provide further insight into their perspective on human interpretations of scripture, a perspective reflected in the writings of Carl Ketcherside, as will be seen below.

A creed, merely a statement of what one believes, from the Latin, *credo*, "I believe," is something every rational individual possesses, whether written or unwritten, and the Campbells were no exception— as their writings demonstrate.[64] What they opposed was not *calling* one's doctrinal deductions a creed, but *imposing* those deductions or doctrines upon others *as a condition for Christian fellowship*. In an ecclesiastical sense, a creed consists of beliefs required of others as terms of union or communion.

While no one could acceptably deny any statement in scripture— *what God has said*— no one was required to accept as true any doctrinal explanation or interpretation of scripture — *what men think God meant by what he has said*— as a condition for fellowship. Rather, each individual had the right to evaluate *for himself* whether a given doctrine was a correct interpretation of scripture. This principle is central to the following statement by Thomas Campbell in his *Declaration and Address*— a passage

frequently quoted but often misunderstood. To aid in understanding a style of English composition no longer familiar to modern readers, I have inserted italicized explanatory comments in square brackets at certain points in the text:

> **That although inferences and deductions [***doctrinal deductions derived***] from Scripture premises, when fairly [***correctly***] inferred, may be truly called the doctrine of God's holy word, yet are they [***such doctrines are***] not formally binding upon the consciences of Christians [***not required to be accepted as true***] farther than they perceive the connection, and evidently see that they are so [***unless they are convinced that such doctrines are correct interpretations of Scripture***]; for their faith must not stand in the wisdom of men [***that is, in human explanations of the meaning of what God has said***], but in the power and veracity of God [***in what God has actually said***].**
>
> **Therefore, no such deductions [***no doctrines or interpretations of scripture***] can be made terms of communion [***required as a condition for fellowship***], but [***such doctrines***] do properly belong to the after and progressive edification of the Church.**
>
> **Hence, it is evident that no such deductions or inferential truths [***no doctrinal deductions***] ought to have any place in the Church's confession [***should not be required as a condition for fellowship***].**[65]

In 1827, Spencer Clack, an editor of the *Baptist Recorder***, wrote to Alexander Campbell:**

> **"You object to creeds and confessions; and for the very same reason I could object to your ancient order of things. You object to creeds because they are not the Bible."**[66]

In his reply, Campbell corrected Clack's misperception and explained:

> **I object to creeds and confessions because made authoritative "*tests of religious character, and terms of Christian communion*;" and never can you, "*for the same reason*," object to the essays I have written on the "*ancient order of things*," because I have never made them, hinted that they should be, or used them as a test of Christian character or terms of Christian communion.**[67]

On the previous page of the same article, Campbell wrote:

> **The Baptist Recorder editors have changed the question altogether. A creed, with them, is all that a man preaches or writes. "Your creed," says brother Clack in his first letter to me— "I mean your writings." Here is the proof, or a summary exhibition of it, that a man's writings are what they call his creed. But is not this most sophistical?** *Who contends that his writings should be made a term of communion*— **a test of Christian character? If Messrs. Waller and Clack do so, I hereby declare** *I do not*.[68]

While, in a technical sense, what one believes is his creed, in an ecclesiastical sense, it becomes a creed *only* **when it is required as a condition for Christian fellowship.**

The Campbell-Rice Debate

In 1843, Alexander Campbell and Nathan Lewis Rice (1807–1877), a Presbyterian clergyman from Paris, Kentucky, met in debate in Lexington, Kentucky. Although best known as a debate about baptism, the final proposition addressed human creeds— *as bonds of union and communion***.**

Although Mr. Rice never seemed to acknowledge— or perhaps never understood— that Campbell's *only* **objection to creeds, whether written or unwritten, was their** *use as a condition for fellowship—* **a fact seemingly lost on many latter-day heirs of the Restoration Movement— Campbell's position could hardly**

have been clearer:

> **A creed or confession of faith is an ecclesiastic document— the mind and will of some synod or council possessing authority—** *as a term of communion*, **by which persons and opinions are to be tested, approbated, or reprobated.**[69]

There are four key takeaways from Campbell's debate with Rice:

1. Campbell did not oppose creeds, written or unwritten, as expressions of personal belief. He acknowledged that his writings could informally be called a creed since they reflected what he believed. He opposed only the use of creeds (including his own) as *tests of fellowship***.**

Early in the debate, Rice claimed that Campbell's book, *The Christian System*, **functioned as a creed, since it represented his interpretation of what the Bible means by what it says. While Campbell acknowledged that his writings expressed his personal beliefs (his personal** *credo* **or creed), his book** *did not function as a creed* **for the following reason:**

> **Does not the gentleman comprehend the difference between writing a book on any religious question, and making that book a creed, a test by which to try the principles of men,** *in order to church or ministerial fellowship***? If Mr. Rice comprehends the difference, to what influence, then, are we to assign his attempt to place this book before you in such an attitude?**[70]

Rice never seems to recognize the difference between the *precise words of scripture* **and the** *doctrines* **of the creeds— imposed as conditions for fellowship. Regarding this aspect of creeds, Campbell objects:**

> **They are so far enforced as to become instruments of excommunication to all those who publicly dissent from**

> **their dogmata. They make a person worthy of excommunication, because of an opinion,** *or a dissent from certain doctrines***; when these opinions and doctrines are publicly avowed.**[71]

Again, in response to to Rice's implication that Campbell's writings constitute a creed, Campbell replies:

> **We have no debate about the right or authority, human or Divine, for writing or reading any sort of book. Nor do we debate about the propriety of giving, in manuscript or in print, an exhibit of all our views of religion or of the Bible. These, at present, would all be false or feigned issues, and introduced to mystify the subject. The issue is about the** *use* **we may make of a book as a creed; or whether we may found a church on an instrument, made up of our own selections from the Bible, or of our own inferences, opinions, and views of expediency, etc.**[72]

Campbell's distinction between the function of the gospel and that of "the doctrine of God's holy word" is crucial to understanding his meaning. The facts of the gospel demand either belief or disbelief. They are accepted as true or rejected as false based on the credibility of available evidence.

In contrast, doctrine must be understood in order to be useful. Yet human understanding is always fallible and necessarily incomplete (1 Corinthians 8:2). For this reason, no doubt, salvation is dependent on belief in facts— not on an understanding of "the doctrine of God's holy word." According to Campbell, one's understanding of doctrine must always be personal and private— never imposed on others.

2. His opposition to the use of creeds as tests of fellowship was based on the fact that they are merely fallible *doctrinal interpretations* **of scripture—** *opinions***— and thus lack divine authority.**

In the first argument of his opening speech on human creeds as bonds of union and communion, Campbell states:

> **That creeds are necessarily heretical [divisive], is argued, first from the fact that they are human and fallible productions. . . . Finites and fallibles are weak authorities when heaven and immortality are at stake. . . . I, too, am a man, and will yield to none the right to dictate to me— God alone is infallible. His word is the only unerring rule of truth.[73]**

By "His word is the only unerring rule of truth," Campbell refers to the very words of scripture— what it expressly says— not to fallible interpretations of its meaning.

3. The only thing that Campbell regarded as divinely authoritative was scripture itself— the actual words of scripture.

In what is perhaps Campbell's clearest statement on what it means to "speak where the scriptures speak"— found in his second address on the proposition concerning creeds— he says:

> **We preach, in the words of that book, the gospel, as promulged by the apostles in Jerusalem. We use, in all important matters,** *the exact words* **of inspiration. We command all men to believe, repent and bring forth fruits worthy of reformation. . . . We propound that confession of the faith** *in the identical words of inspiration***; so that they who avow it, express a divine faith, and build upon a consecrated foundation— a well tried corner stone.[74]**

In the seventeenth installment of his series of essays on "A Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things," Campbell explained that every human creed, or doctrinal statement, "adds to, subtracts from, or transposes the words of inspiration," mingling divine revelation with human interpretation. Consequently, all doctrinal declarations exceed the mold or form of the inspired statements of scripture.[75]

This statement, perhaps more clearly than any other, contrasts doctrinal interpretations— which men *may* believe— with "the exact words of inspiration"— which men *must* believe. It was the latter that Campbell regarded as the sole basis for matters of faith and visible unity.

The *Harbinger*, "Extra, No. 4," contains two hundred questions and answers on various topics, including one on "Opinions:"

(1) *Are private opinions to become matters of discipline?* **In other words, if a brother shares an interpretation of scripture with others, should he be disciplined?**

To this Campbell responds that expressing such opinions should be a matter of discipline *only* when they are made tests of fellowship, in which case the individual would be a factionist.

(2) *Are such opinions purely academic and not to be regarded as moral principles?*

Campbell observes that such opinions should remain *only* intellectual matters *only*. When proposed as principles for acceptance with God, they are elevated to the level of divine oracles— to be obeyed as if they were the inspired words of scripture.[76]

In his debate with Rice, Campbell makes clear that his rejection of creeds is based on their substitution for the inspired text of scripture. Otherwise, he would have no objection to any person or institution publishing their views, tenets, or practices. Writing one's opinions (or doctrinal interpretations) is no different from speaking them. But Campbell is intensely opposed to making such doctrinal statements *terms of communion or bonds of union*— by which members are received or rejected— whether the doctrine stated is true or false.[77]

As evidence that he was not alone in opposing doctrinal

statements as tests of fellowship, Campbell points to the diversity of doctrinal views among the churches of the reformers. He notes that their bond of union is faith in Christ, and acknowledging as requisite to that faith *nothing but* Christ and him crucified. Being absorbed in the Lord Jesus, "we do not talk of old opinions."[78]

In the same context, Campbell continues:

> **We stand on ground much more catholic and charitable; embracing, *without regard to so many diversities of opinion*, all who sincerely believe in the Messiah, and are willing to be governed by his precepts.[79]**

In his next speech, Campbell affirms that while the reformers are bound in union by the one faith, they allow perfect freedom of opinion. Together, he asserts, these two principles constitute the *true philosophy of church union* and an *antidote against division*. He notes that they long ago learned to "draw a well-defined boundary between *faith* and *opinion*". And while contending earnestly for the *faith*, they allow full freedom in expressing an *opinion* or doctrine. This, Campbell says, is a sovereign antidote against heresy (division).

As evidence of such liberty, Campbell points to those within their fellowship who were strong Calvinists, and others who were strong Arminians, noting that it was not their goal to make men "think alike" regarding the interpretation of scripture or "doctrines of religion," so long as they "hold to the head Christ and keep his commandments." He suggests that the best way to combat opinionism is simply to ignore it. On the contrary, he says, "You may debate any thing into consequence, or you may, by a dignified silence, waste it into oblivion."[80]

Campbell contended that a member could be excluded from the church's social fellowship for *only* one of three reasons — none of which pertained to opinions or doctrinal interpretations:

> **Indeed, there is nothing strictly sectarian in our views. There is no opinionism in our system of operations. The facts we believe are admitted; the ordinances we practice are admitted; the piety and the morality we inculcate, are admitted— universally admitted, by all Christendom.**
>
> **There are none excluded from our communities but those who *deny the faith*, those *immoral* or unrighteous, and those who are *schismatics*. These three classes are by divine authority to be severed from the faithful. The schismatic is excluded, *not for his opinion*, but for the unrighteous use he makes of it.[81]**

When Campbell says, "There is no opinionism in our system of operations," we should understand *opinionism* as "doctrinal censorship." Evidence for this conclusion lies in Campbell's response to Rice, where he cites the "destructionist" doctrine of Dr. Thomas. Although Thomas was withdrawn from, the action was *not* prompted by his advocacy of an erroneous doctrine:

> **We know whom to exclude. Amongst them, however, are none for any particular mode of interpreting the Scriptures; but *for the use made of their interpretation of it*. Morality lies in that, and not in the different ways of reading and interpreting a verse.[82]**

Later that year, following the Rice debate, Campbell published an article in the *Harbinger* titled "Dr. John Thomas," in which he again states his reasons for declaring non-fellowship with Thomas:

> **This gentleman, no longer building upon the foundation with us, but having set out *to form a party* for himself, has openly completed the character of a *schismatic* as delineated by the Apostle Paul, and *as such* is to be rejected by all the brethren.[83]**

Dr. Thomas was rejected from the *social* fellowship of the church not for his doctrine, but for his divisiveness.

Summary

It is impossible for all Christians to understand the meaning of all scripture simultaneously and in the same way. Furthermore, *if* each individual has the right to interpret scripture, and *if* fidelity to Christ is to be determined by correct doctrinal interpretation, then, by necessity, there would be one church for every individual— since no two people completely agree upon the meaning of scripture. Consequently, Paul's command, that Christians "be *perfectly* joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment," must refer to *something other than an identical, simultaneous understanding of scripture*.

In the Protestant world of Thomas Campbell's day, fidelity to Christ was judged by one's affirmation of belief in the propositional content of a creed. These creeds presented *doctrinal interpretations* of scripture in a concise form. However, they did not agree with one another, as they were written by different groups of people with different presuppositions about how scripture should be interpreted.

The providential genius of Thomas Campbell's proposal for unity lies in the elimination of human interpretation (doctrinal deductions or *opinions*) from the criteria for determining whether one is in fellowship with God and, consequently, with God's other children. Citing Romans 15:7, Campbell maintained that fellowship is determined *solely* by whether he has been received by Christ through obedience to the gospel: "Wherefore *receive ye one another, as Christ also received us* to the glory of God."

Campbell's proposal that we accept others on the same basis upon which God received us and eliminate doctrinal

deductions or interpretations as a condition for fellowship— meant simply that *nothing more should be required for fellowship than is required for sonship***.**

With this single proposal, Campbell, for the first time in post-apostolic Christianity, reconciled the visible unity of all believers *and* **the personal freedom to interpret scripture according to conscience.**

It is regrettable that modern heirs of the Stone-Campbell restoration movement have failed to restore primitive Christianity, having restored instead the creedalism of early nineteenth-century America. Any claim to honoring Campbell as the father of the movement is patently contradicted by their open rejection of his proposal for unity and their indisputable adoption of a counterfeit.

To "speak where the Bible speaks," for modern heirs of the movement, is to explain— give opinions about— what the Bible means by what it says. Such traditional explanations have been elevated to the level of the gospel and confused with its purpose and content. Failing to distinguish between that which begets (the good news) with that which nourishes (the doctrine of God's holy word), they have esteemed intellectual acuity above holiness of life. Theirs is a Christianity of tenets, in which one is considered faithful to Christ *only* **to the extent that his theology is deemed correct by the ecclesiastical powers that be.**

Although modern heirs of the movement receive *some* **of those whom Christ has received, the Christianity of their converts has an extraordinarily limited shelf-life. They must quickly align with the group's unwritten creed— no cups, no instrument, no classes, no institutions, no societies, etc.— or be banished as reprobates, assigned the same status as those who flatly deny that Christ has come in the flesh.**

While these churches deny creedalism, it is, by definition,

precisely what they practice. That their creed is *unwritten* is of no consequence— except that it creates the *illusion* that their uniform beliefs, published in books and journals and preached weekly from pulpits, do not constitute a creed or a statement of belief, conformity to which is required as a condition for fellowship.

Thomas Campbell's dictum, "Where the Bible speaks, we speak; where it is silent, we are silent," remains the watchword of heirs of the Stone-Campbell Movement, and the "restoration of the ancient order of things" or the effort to restore the New Testament pattern continues to be their stated objective.

It is noteworthy, however, that neither Thomas nor Alexander Campbell regarded doctrinal deductions or inferences as conditions of union or communion. Consistent with that view, neither considered the propositions of the *Declaration and Address* or the content of the "ancient order of things" to be tests of Christian fellowship. In this respect, they differed radically from modern heirs of the movement.

Ketcherside and the Principles of Restoration

The following sample of Ketcherside's writings on the principles of restoration, as set forth by Thomas and Alexander Campbell, demonstrates that his thinking in this regard was consistent with that of the movement's founders. However, he observes that the heirs of the movement have abandoned those principles, necessitating a *restoration of the restoration*— based upon the original principles.

On Speaking Where the Bible Speaks

For many heirs of the Restoration Movement, the dictum "Speak where the Bible speaks, and remain silent where it is

silent" is understood to mean simply, "We follow only the Bible in all matters of faith and practice." If this were its true meaning, the movement would not be unique, as many groups have pursued this goal since the Protestant Reformation began in 1517. Nevertheless, modern heirs commonly misperceive the movement as unique because they believe it has succeeded in correctly understanding the Bible— where all others have failed.

In examining "The Church of Christ" at its most vital point, Carl Ketcherside wrote:

> **In every controversy between members of its own factions, or between the members of one such faction and those of another religious group, the first court of appeal is to the proper basis of authority in the Christian religion. It is generally affirmed that the one and only all-sufficient rule of faith and practice is the revelation of God in the sacred scriptures. So classic has this statement become that many members of "The Church of Christ" labor under the impression that they are the only ones who make the claim and that all other religionists have no particular regard for the authority of the scriptures. Strangely enough almost every sect in Protestantism makes the same claim. Let us mention a few of them by way of documentation.[84]**

Ketcherside then quotes from various denominational manuals of discipline, including those of the Methodists, United Brethren in Christ, the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and the Friends' Church. Each expresses something very similar to the following:

> **The Methodist Church in its fifth of the "Articles of Religion" says, "The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."[85]**

Ketcherside continues:

> **Confronted with such statements many members of "The Church of Christ" laugh in sheer derision. They brand all of the adherents of these other religious parties as insincere and false to their alleged standard. It is commonly believed that only members of "The Church of Christ" are truly honest in stating that they regard the scriptures as "the only rule of faith and practice." All others who say this are either deceived or deceivers. Now we have no desire to become a professional "debunker" nor operate as an "idol-smasher," but we think it is quite apparent that most members of "The Church of Christ" are laboring under a strong delusion when they express the view that they always "speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where it is silent."[86]**

Ketcherside often expressed concern that while the heirs of the movement aimed to speak *where* the Bible speaks, they had not been careful to speak *as* the Bible speaks. In fact, he questioned whether the slogan was more of a cliché than a governing principle.

> **There may be some question as to whether it is possible to literally implement the import of the statement, but in any event each faction makes it sufficiently elastic to include what it wants to include and to exclude what it wants to deny. We are treated to the ridiculous sight of two dozen parties "speaking where the Bible speaks," and all saying something different; and "remaining silent where the Bible is silent," while openly denouncing the silences of each other.[87]**

One of the "Five Specific Indictments" Ketcherside makes against Churches of Christ is that each of their nearly two dozen factions claims to speak where the Bible speaks. However, he observes:

> **Every one of them denies that any of the others do so. The truth is that we have accumulated and compiled a mass of**

traditional explanations and interpretations which we have crystallized into a form of "unsystematic theology," and it is according to this, and not the word of God, that we speak! If the ideas distilled from the Bible and molded by the thinking of John Calvin constitute Presbyterianism; and those distilled and molded by the thinking of John Wesley constitute Methodism; by the same token those we have adopted and adapted constitute Church-of-Christ-ism. And just as all theological forms seek to make Christianity over after their own image and according to their own likeness, so we also do![88]

As Ketcherside explains:

> **We do not approach the sacred scriptures, or anything else, with a mental vacuum, or an intellectual void. We must go in the only way we can, caught up in the human predicament, the heirs of our own environment, the victims of our own limitations and shortcomings, and of the indoctrination of others. Our teachers were imperfect in knowledge, and their students are no different.**
>
> **We examine the word of God upon the basis of our pre-suppositions. These have been formed by a compilation of isolated and remote scriptures. They grow out of an examination of God's action in specific cases, from which we construct our generalizations. These make up our philosophy of interpretation of the word of God which we regard as authoritative. But the problem comes when we confuse our philosophy of interpretation with the basis of authority, and seek to bind it upon others as the divine will.[89]**

In a later essay, Ketcherside further comments:

> **Our problem is not that we do not speak where the Bible speaks, or remain silent where the Bible is silent, but that we approach the speaking and the silence from**

different positions, neither of which is dictated by the Bible. But why do we need a philosophy of interpretation at all? Why not just go straight to the Bible without interpretation? The answer is the same as if someone asks, "Why not go straight to the moon without fooling around with space capsules and vehicles? If it is there, just land on it and forget all about the expensive in-between stuff." The reply is that we cannot do this because we are human beings. An angel might make the trip without the tedious process, but we cannot. And neither can we obtain God's meaning without thought vehicles as do rational creatures. Our brethren have been "just obeying the Bible without interpreting it" for years and we have more than two dozen faithful churches now which have nothing to do with one another![90]

In his book, *The Twisted Scriptures*, **Ketcherside writes:**

In the particular movement with which I was identified one of the earliest proponents coined the expression, "We will speak where the Bible speaks, and remain silent where the Bible is silent." This worthy resolution became the watchword of the movement and when it did, was translated by attitude and action into a weapon rather than into an instrument of righteousness.

More than anything else it tended to develop a prooftext approach to the sacred scriptures and men became "scrap doctors" as Alexander Campbell referred to them. The tendency developed into a way of life and men searched the scriptures to validate presuppositions, and to find justification for what they already thought and did. A generation arose which spoke where the Bible spoke, but was not concerned in speaking as the Bible speaks.[91]

In chapter 8 of that same work titled "Walking in the Light," Ketcherside recounts:

It was my lot to grow up in a religious movement

which had its inception in a sincere attempt to "unite the Christians in all of the sects." It proposed to accomplish this by the very simple expedient of renouncing all formal creeds and ignoring the sects which they had spawned and returning to the original pattern as depicted in the apostolic writings. To assure success in restoring the ancient order the slogan was adopted, "We speak where the Bible speaks, and remain silent where the Bible is silent."

Unfortunately for such historic efforts, the noble men who conceive them grow old and die and are succeeded by others who retain the idea without the ideals or character. In order to preserve the gains that have been made, intellectual walls are erected, and soon the very spirit of freedom which gave rise to the effort is proscribed. The love letters of the apostles are converted into a law to be enforced, the movement itself becomes "the Lord's church," and the traditional legalistic interpretations become hallowed precepts, so that "the System" which evolves is confused with the will of God and "the scheme of redemption."[92]

On the Declaration and Address

In his 1961 essay on "Restoring Restoration," Ketcherside raises concerns about the status of the movement launched by the *Declaration and Address***:**

It is not our purpose in this article to analyze the notable document first read by its author in the little Pennsylvania community more than a hundred and fifty years ago. In our humble opinion it constitutes one of the greatest uninspired documents in the history of the Christian religion. We are chiefly concerned just now with the spirit which called it forth and with an examination of the current status of the movement which it launched. We are anxious to determine if that movement has forgotten

its goal and gone aground on the rocks of party strife. . . .[93]

As noted earlier, a correct understanding of scripture requires correct interpretation. However, it is significant that the Campbells never included the various— and often contradictory — interpretations of scripture as matters of fellowship, even when they questioned their content. In this regard, Ketcherside wrote:

> We must never overlook the fact that the partisan spirit always substitutes the interpretation of God's word for the word itself and demands conformity not just to what God says but to what the party deduces he meant when he said it. This completely alters the Christian system. It makes salvation dependent upon attainment to a certain degree of knowledge rather than upon faith in a person.
>
> This has been the real root of division within all Christendom. It is the basis of most controversy among sincere religionists. It is the ground of orthodoxy which has been used to stifle all original thought and hound out as traitors all honest dissenters. It is the rock upon which every restoration movement in history has run aground and been battered to pieces. The Campbells clearly understood this and labored to offset it in advance. They did this by two methods. First, they carefully defined the terms essential to entrance into the fellowship, showing what was involved in faith. In the second place they carefully point out that unanimity of opinion, interpretation or knowledge in doctrinal matters could never be made a proper foundation for unity.[94]

Ketcherside goes on to say:

> Having come to a realization through observation and study that fellowship in Christ can never be made contingent upon conformity in interpretation, Thomas Campbell expressed this idea in his "Declaration and

Address." The careful student will be amazed at the wisdom exhibited in his statement. It places reasoning and research in proper perspective. The right of every individual to go directly to the sacred writings for himself and the concomitant right to form conclusions based upon his personal investigation is asserted. It is conceded that when deductive reasoning is fairly done the concepts may be called the doctrine of God's word. But it is asserted that these concepts are not *formally* binding upon the consciences of Christians except as they are grasped and understood to be truth.

I must confess that I studied this matter for years before I caught the significance of the word "formally." Every man who sets to his seal that God is true thereby obligates himself to accept all truth as revealed by God. But the nature of man necessitated that revelation be given gradually and progressively— "line upon line, line upon line, here a little and there a little." Revelation has been perfected but man has not. His knowledge and understanding of truth must also be gradual and progressive. He must "grow in grace and knowledge of the truth." Every man in Christ sustains a *moral* obligation to the creator to accept all truth as it is revealed to his consciousness to be truth. Because of his frailty and imperfection some things may appear to be truth in one stage of development which will need to be discarded in the brightness of greater light.

No two of us possess the same degree of mental aptitude. We are at various stages of growth and intellectual attainment. It would violate conscience to be forced to acknowledge as truth that which cannot be personally established as truth. To take the reasoning of one individual or group and bind that *formally* upon all others, even those who have not as yet been able to arrive at the same conclusions, is to do an injustice to the human spirit and is a violation of the Christian ethic. Such matters must not be made terms of fellowship but belong to the edification of the members of the body in love.[95]

With regard to the influence of the clergy on doctrinal interpretations, Ketcherside points out:

> **Almost without exception every reformation inaugurated to free men from the dominance of a clergy has ended up with a clergy of its own. . . . By the same token the doctrinal interpretations of these must be accepted without question. To doubt the clergy is to disbelieve God. The Romish church set up an *infallible interpreter.* Most of the parties growing out of the Restoration Movement believe they have an *infallible interpretation*. The last is actually worse than the first for belief in an infallible interpreter will at least preserve unity. . . . An infallible interpretation substitutes party dogmas for papal decrees and is productive of division every time someone discovers additional truth.**
>
> **Perhaps it was a realization of the dangers inherent in dogmatism and orthodoxy that prompted Thomas Campbell to reject doctrinal knowledge and conformity as the basis for Christian fellowship. Of course, he was also motivated by a clear conception of the foundation of communion as expressed by God. One reads with wonder and amazement the safeguards thrown about truth and his heart is saddened to see how his own brethren, by deviating from these announced principles, have not only failed the restoration movement but have become sectarian in doing so. . . . It is a sad and tragic thing that we have now made a full circle and are once more involved in sectarianism of our own creation because we have lost the truths enunciated so many years ago.[96]**

Just two years before ceasing publication of *Mission Messenger*, Ketcherside wrote an article on "Opinions," marveling at the wisdom and foresight of the fathers of the movement in establishing a union based upon facts while avoiding the confusion that arises from speculation about those facts:

> **The longer I sojourn among men and the more**

ardently I study the message of divine revelation, the more enamored do I become of the ideal of those princes of the faith who caught a glimpse of the pristine unity of all believers in Christ and proposed to restore it by renouncing all creeds and confessions as a basis of oneness, except the great and abiding foundation truth that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the living God.

The efforts which they exerted to effect such union, and which gained the momentum to graduate into a swelling movement, are laudable and praiseworthy. It is fascinating to realize that they captured the concept of oneness predicated upon belief in and reliance upon historical facts directly related to the person of Jesus, and at the same time had the foresight to distinguish between those facts and any opinion or speculation formed concerning them. The hope of a united body of saints was thus lifted out of the morass of debates and tumults and placed upon the solid ground of verifiable fact.

Properly understood, this strikes at the very heart of all sectarianism. If the gospel is Jesus Christ himself, and if obedience to it is simply identification with him in the saving facts of his death, burial and resurrection, we have a basis upon which to unite everyone on this earth who believes into him through the apostolic testimony or proclamation. By its very nature the gospel, the evangel, is unitive. It calls men out and calls them together. God calls us into congregation with one another and not to separation from one another.[97]

Along these same lines, Ketcherside remarks further:

To me it appears quite tragic that most of the heirs of the restoration movement have lost all consciousness of their great patrimony. As a result, they are milling about defending their unwritten creeds as fervently as their fathers once rejected them. Remember that whatever one must mentally or verbally subscribe to in order to be received by or welcomed in a party is the creed of that

party. This is as certain as if that thing were emblazoned above the speaker's platform. And whatever grounds are urged as a basis for excluding one from communion constitutes the creed of those who exclude him. And their exclusion of him upon any other grounds than a rejection of the Lordship of Jesus over his life, proves that they are a sect in the fairest terms of the word.

Those who exclude their brethren because their views, explanations and opinions are at variance with the orthodox views of the group should cease parading under the guise of being Christians only! To be fair they should itemize and print the things one must believe, and those which he must not hold, in order to remain in the party. They should present this list to all prospects prior to baptism. True, this could constitute a written creed, but it would at least make the sect honest and open. It is dishonest to bring people in on the glad good news that our only creed is Jesus, and then throw them out because they did not read the fine print in the contract. We need to stress our exceptions as well as our acceptance.[98]

On the Ancient Order of Things

In a 1958 essay, Carl Ketcherside wrote on restoration and unity:

There are two great themes which engross my attention in these days. One is the restoration of the ancient order; the other the unity of all believers in the Christ. I consider that they are related. I doubt that the latter can be achieved without a sincere attempt to accomplish the first. I recognize that the church of God is fractured by schisms, and we have not achieved the ideal of God, so I am interested in any problem linked either to unity or restoration.[99]

The following year, in "Facing the Future," he maintains

that the plea for restoring the ancient order is the only hope for the unity for which Jesus prayed.

> **This will not be a factional journal. It is not a "brotherhood paper" in the common usage of that term. It does not exist to plead for separation or segregation of disciples of our Lord on the basis of opinions relative to classes, individual cups, baptisteries, orphan homes, colleges, societies, pre-millennialism, or any other thing. Men may divide over these, but this journal will not become a factional mouthpiece for any party, segment, clique or faction. The editor has decided convictions on all these matters and will state them. A majority of writers may hold the same views, but the paper will not degenerate into a party organ. We will not denounce those who differ as pagans or heathen, nor refuse to regard them as children of God and brethren.**
>
> **We will continue to plead for restoration of the ancient order as the only hope of answering the prayer of Jesus for the unity of all believers. We will do this in a spirit of firmness and fairness. We will not force our views upon others as terms of fellowship. Those who disagree with us will be regarded as brethren. If they want space to set forth dissenting views it will be granted when available, and if we reply, it will be in love.[100]**

Later that year, Ketcherside wrote specifically about that branch of the restoration movement known as the Disciples of Christ:

> **What about the Disciples of Christ? Some of my good personal friends are affiliated with this denomination. I doubt not that there are many children of God in the number, and despite pronouncements such as the Sand Creek Declaration, I regard them as brethren, although I do not endorse their ideas on many things, and deplore some of their religious practices. But, as a body, this group has abandoned the idea of the restoration of the ancient order of things. This was not accomplished in "one**

fell swoop" but came as the result of many contributing causes.[101]

Ketcherside further explains:

> **As I view the situation, the Disciples Church is merely another sect among sects. I say this charitably, with no intention of conveying hate or animosity, for I feel neither. This condition might not be so bad, if it were not by choice. A body of believers, like an individual, might be "overtaken in a fault." Under such circumstances restoration might be effected by spiritual men working in a spirit of meekness. All of us have manifested some sectarian tendencies in these latter days, but the condition is not irremediable, if, like Nehemiah, we weep, mourn, fast, pray before the God of heaven, and confess, "Both I and my father's house have sinned." But these brethren have followed a calculated course, and a deliberate policy, which has led them to deny the restoration principles which called them into being, and the sufficiency of the revelation of God which alone can act as compass and pole star in the turbulent, storm-swept ocean of life.**
>
> **I do not charge them with insincerity or hypocrisy. I do not question their honesty nor challenge their integrity. I doubt not that many of them feel they are rendering God service in their present course. Nor does my evaluation of the movement cause me to repudiate any truth that is held, or derogate any good work that is accomplished. I simply feel that these brethren have fallen victims to the spirit of this age, unwittingly perhaps, but nonetheless surely and truly so. And for that reason, I do not feel that we can rely upon the philosophy in which they trust as providing hope in these troublous times. I am sorry this is so.[102]**

On Creeds

Regarding creeds and "Churches of Christ," Ketcherside wrote:

While spokesmen for "The Church of Christ" assail the religious world for their creeds, no group of people now in existence have devised, employed or enforced more unwritten creeds. . . . Certainly, whatever is required by any group as a test of admission to its fellowship is the creed of that group. . . . A favorite slogan is "We speak where the Bible speaks, and remain silent where it is silent." This claim is proven to be ridiculous in the light of events. How can there be twenty divergent and non-cooperating factions, if all follow the Bible as their only creed?

The truth is that it is not the Bible, but opinions of it, and interpretations of it, which constitute the real creeds of all the warring factions. Revelation is what God said; interpretation is what men think he meant by what he said. So, revelation is an expression of the divine mind; interpretation is the application of human minds to it, to determine in the light of reason, what is required of us. But the exaltation of interpretation to the place of authority, not only supplants the divine revelation, but creates a human basis of belief and worship, and the demanding of unvarying conformity to such a basis is popery undisguised. There is nothing infallible about human reasoning, or interpretation.[103]

Another of the "Five Specific Indictments" Ketcherside levels against Churches of Christ is that they "profess openly to deplore creeds but are among the most creed-ridden of religious movements in this age." He writes:

The fact that their creeds are unwritten makes them all the more dangerous. Every test of fellowship is a creed. Whatever one must believe to be recognized and regarded as "loyal" is the creed of the faction that requires it. That we have at least twenty-four creeds is proven by our two dozen parties with their "loyalty tests." We have forsaken the divinely ordained justification by faith in Christ Jesus and postulated a humanly devised system of justification by an attitude toward music, societies, cups, classes,

colleges, charitable institutions, unfulfilled prophecy and a whole host of other things which are elevated to a place of greater importance than the blood of Jesus Christ our Lord. To this very day men are driven out of "The Church of Christ" for no other "sin" than association with brethren who do not pass the party test![104]

For Additional Study

The following is a list of articles by W. Carl Ketcherside that discuss the topic of the current chapter in greater detail. All of Ketcherside's essays are available in volumes 1 and 3 of the *e-book* series *The Works of W. Carl Ketcherside*, accessible on Amazon.com and archive.org.

- **"Is It New Doctrine?"** *Mission Messenger* **(February 1958): 12.**
- **"Schisms and Parties."** *Mission Messenger* **(November 1959): 1.**
- **"Church of Christ Party."** *Mission Messenger* **(December 1959): 1.**
- **"Only One Church."** *Mission Messenger* **(June 1961): 1.**
- **"Christians in Babylon."** *Mission Messenger* **(June 1961): 8.**
- **"Restoring Restoration."** *Mission Messenger* **(August 1961): 1.**
- **"Background of Restoration."** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1961): 1.**
- **"The Growth of Division."** *Mission Messenger* **(November 1961): 1.**
- **"Rejecting and Returning."** *Mission Messenger* **(December 1961): 1.**
- **"Brothers at Law."** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1962): 1.**
- **"The Sand Creek Address."** *Mission Messenger* **(February 1962): 1.**
- **"Factional Flames."** *Mission Messenger* **(April 1962): 1.**
- **"A Letter from Texas."** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1967): 129.**
- **"Facing the Issues."** *Mission Messenger* **(January 1970): 1.**
- **"Time for Change."** *Mission Messenger* **(December 1974): 177.**

Chapter 8

ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN

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Introduction

> **"I suggest that the reason we are divided over the apostolic pattern is because there is none." —***W. Carl Ketcherside***, "The Money Pattern,"** *Mission Messenger* **(July 1970): 97.**

The theme for *Mission Messenger* **for 1970 was "Our Living Pattern." In the lead article for February, "According to the Pattern," Carl Ketcherside describes a diversity of beliefs and practices that have been regarded over time as part of "the New Testament pattern." Among the numerous examples he relates is one involving his father, William Ketcherside:**

> **A number of years ago my father went to speak for a congregation on the Lord's Day. By enquiring in advance, he learned that he would speak following the Lord's Supper. Imagine his surprise when the congregation stood following the Supper, and while singing a hymn, all marched out of the building. Thinking he had misunderstood the arrangement, Father got his hat and book and started out, only to meet them all coming back in. They informed him that they followed the divine pattern, for the Book teaches that "when they had sung a hymn, they went out." Father did not have the nerve to tell them that the record said, "they went out** *into the mount of Olives***."[1]**

The fact that Jesus and his disciples "went out" was purely incidental to their singing of a hymn and doesn't reflect a defective knowledge of the Bible. Rather, it points to a defective philosophy of interpretation that fails to specify which aspects of New Testament examples are binding and which are merely incidental. Furthermore, while it presumably guarantees each individual the freedom to interpret scripture according to conscience, it circumscribes that freedom by the interpretation of church leaders.

Since the turn of the twentieth century, heirs of the Stone-

Campbell restoration movement— following the above system of Bible interpretation— have divided over colleges, orphan homes, *Herald of Truth*, use of tobacco, missionary societies, interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy, leavened bread, the manner of breaking the bread, the manner of distributing the bread, fermented wine, individual cups, Bible classes, uninspired literature, the one-man pastor system, instrumental music, foot washing, the hour for the assembly, head coverings for women, tuning forks, baptisteries, collection plates, seminaries, benevolent institutions, kitchens in the church building, saints only, speaking in tongues, centralized control, television sets, marriage of divorced persons, divine healing, the hour for eating the Lord's Supper, evangelists, order of worship, present status of elders, the war question, closed communion, and a second Lord's Supper on Sunday night.[2]

Divisions occur within the movement when either (1) someone discovers what he believes to be a new truth in scripture that others cannot see and insists that it be accepted as part of the "New Testament pattern," or (2) someone discovers in the currently accepted pattern a teaching or practice which he finds to be contrary to scripture.

Those who include in the pattern what others oppose are regarded as *liberals*, while those who exclude from the pattern what others accept are regarded as *antis*.

The pursuit of unity upon the basis of coerced conformity to a perceived pattern of doctrine and practice has never maintained visible unity where all members are free to express their views without fear of reprisal. However, it often creates a façade of unity when the beliefs of individual members remains largely unknown or ignored.

Patternism, as history has consistently shown, is an approach to unity that is inherently divisive. Ketcherside aptly describes the outcome of such efforts when he writes: "We are as

divided as if it were God's will and he had repeatedly commanded it as the one means of fulfilling the divine purpose on earth."[3]

As Ketcherside often pointed out, there is a difference in the *authority* of Jesus Christ and any *philosophy with which that authority is interpreted*.[4] Like all discourse, whether human or divine, the scriptures must be interpreted to be understood. But what the Bible *says* is not to be confused with what we say it *means*. Furthermore, the scriptures provide no *method* by which they are to be interpreted.

Difficulties of Patternism

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, the *de facto* method used by heirs of the Stone-Campbell Movement to discern how the scriptures are to be understood and applied has been the "pattern" philosophy of interpretation. This approach presents serious difficulties because it is used to arrive at terms of Christian fellowship. It is this philosophy of interpretation, applied in an exclusivistic manner as a condition for union and communion, that I refer to as "patternism."

Below I have summarized the difficulties associated with the use of patternism as an approach to unity, and as a determinant of fidelity to God, in terms that reflect the thinking of Carl Ketcherside. Following this overview, we will hear from Ketcherside in his own words.

1. There was never a time when the early church or any apostle had access to the entire collection of the twenty-seven documents we now call the new covenant scriptures or the *New Testament*. In fact, the church did not reach a consensus on which of those documents were to be included in the New Testament canon until the fourth century.

Furthermore, it is quite probable that few, if any, of those

who responded to Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost were alive at the time John penned the final words of the Apocalypse, at the end of the first-century. Consequently, there could not have been a first-century "pattern" of church organization, practice, and doctrine claiming apostolic authority that took into account the entire contents of the new covenant scriptures.

2. The scriptures do not expressly provide a philosophy of interpretation for understanding and applying their contents. Any claim to the contrary rests on human inferences or interpretation and is without divine sanction.

3. Because human perception is never uniform, people never understand discourse in precisely the same way. This limitation in human perception will consistently prevent people from ever having identical concepts about anything. It will also prevent absolute comprehension of the meaning of scripture.

4. While perceived patterns of organization, practice, and teaching by the apostolic writers of the new covenant scriptures should be followed to the best of one's understanding, it is a violation of scripture to censor a believer for his imbecility— that is, his inability to understand God's revelation to the same degree as others.

As Paul states, "Those who think they know something do not yet know as they ought to know" (1 Corinthians 8:2). Yet he did not censor those whose thinking was deficient or immature, since deficiency in knowledge is characteristic of all. In fact, he makes allowances for those who "think differently" from those who are mature in their thinking (Philippians 3:15).

As Ketcherside would say, "We are all ignorant, but just about different things." This same deficiency is reflected also in Peter's description of Paul's writings: "His letters contain some things that are hard to understand"— things that some will never understand due to limitations of intellect and lifespan.

5. Division resulting from patternism is contrary to scripture, which requires that believers maintain the unity of the Spirit. Defenders of patternism argue that it is precisely because we are to be united that we must all interpret the Bible alike, citing Jesus's prayer for unity in John 17. However, what they insist must be interpreted alike is *not* the entirety of the new covenant scriptures— since none have ever achieved such agreement— but fewer than a dozen passages of scripture that distinguish them from other believers. These are the *non-negotiable* doctrines about which there must be uniformity of *endorsement*— not understanding— as a condition to fellowship. This is the essence of patternism.

A closer look at Jesus's prayer for the unity of his followers will show that he asked that those who believe on his name be one *in the same way* in which he and the father are one. And he further specifies: "that they may be one as we are one . . . I in them and you in me . . . that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them" (vv. 22, 23, 26).

If visible unity is to be based on intellectual understanding of the New Testament scriptures, then Jesus's prayer would require that our understanding of those scriptures be as extensive as that of the Father and the Son. But that is not what Jesus specified. He asked that his followers be united with him as a result of his being *in them*. He then describes how this was to come about: He prayed that "the love you have for me"— that is the love of God's divine nature, shared by the Father and the Son— was to be in his followers. This would result in his being *in them*, just as, or in the same way, that the Father was in him.

It is Ketcherside's view that the unity *of* the Spirit is that which results from the Spirit of God living in each believer, as well as in the Father and the Son. In his thinking, this is the essence of spiritual unity and fellowship. It occurs when the divine love of God is poured into the hearts of believers by the Spirit whom they are given (Romans 5:5), enabling them to

share in the divine *nature*.

6. The idea that believers must separate over differing interpretations of scripture was not formally introduced into the Restoration Movement in America until 1889, when Daniel Sommer, in his *Address and Declaration*, declared that all who failed to reject certain doctrines and practices— that is, who did not accept his interpretation of scripture regarding those matters— would no longer be considered brethren. However, like modern practitioners of patternism, he failed to provide New Testament authority for assuming the prerogative of selecting, on behalf of others, *specific* doctrines to which conformity was to be required as a condition for union and communion.

7. Patternism, as a philosophy of interpretation enforced as a condition of fellowship, is not to be found in the writings of the restoration fathers, as documented in the previous chapter. Thomas Campbell considered nothing in his *Declaration and Address* to be a condition for union or communion. Likewise, Alexander Campbell explicitly denied that any part of his *Ancient Order of Things* should be regarded as a test of fellowship. Otherwise, he maintained, it would constitute a *creed* in every sense of the word.

Nevertheless, it is that same *ancient order*— along with new codicils added for each new division— that modern heirs of the movement have set forth as a "New Testament pattern" to which all must assent and conform in order to remain in the fellowship.

8. The past 100 years of division within the Restoration Movement— produced by attempts to coerce conformity to what has been perceived as a pattern of apostolic teaching and procedure— have clearly shown that patternism can never serve as a basis for visible unity or for determining who is in fellowship with the Father. Furthermore, any philosophy of interpretation which consistently produces division in the face of

honest dissent must be recognized not only as unscriptural but as *anti-scriptural* as well.

9. Finally, the credibility of patternism as a condition for Christian fellowship is completely undermined by the fact that there are as many "patterns" as divisions within the movement. This fact alone demonstrates that the visible unity of believers can never be achieved on the basis of doctrinal deductions from scripture. However, those who perceive their relationship with God to depend on their compliance with his law reject this conclusion because they know of no other way to relate to God. Consequently, they see no logical alternative but to question the sincerity and integrity of those who disagree with their doctrinal deductions.

During the previous century, heirs of the Stone-Campbell restoration movement were so thoroughly indoctrinated with the concept of a "New Testament pattern" that questioning its existence is as shocking as questioning the authority of scripture itself. However, for those who recognize the inconsistent and self-contradictory spectacle of a unity movement divided into nearly two dozen groups— each claiming to follow the *true* "New Testament pattern"— an objective re-examination of the hermeneutic of patternism is critically needed.

Patternism as a condition for fellowship constitutes a B.C. approach to an A.D. world— an Old Testament view of how Christians relate to God under a covenant of grace. It is an attempt to re-purpose the new covenant scriptures to serve Christians as the old covenant scriptures served the Jews— as a means of becoming acceptable to God. In fact, the new covenant scriptures have often been referred to as the "new law," given by grace, to regulate the behavior and teaching of the followers of Christ, though the phrase itself is not to be found in the apostolic writings.

It is important to recognize that righteousness does not

exist by degree. One either keeps the entire law (and is righteous) or fails in some point (and is unrighteous). Under a legal system, such as the law of Moses, ignorance or non-compliance is simply not an option. Such an approach to God assumes that one has absolute knowledge of the law at all times, as well as sufficient self-awareness to recognize non-compliance has occurred, so as to confess one's sin, repent, and request forgiveness— as is required under a legal system of justification.

But those who hold this view of the new covenant argue that under Christ, our imperfections are covered by his grace. They believe that after doing their best to understand and comply with God's will, his grace, through the merits of Christ, will cover their ignorance and imperfections— since all are imperfect and ignorant to some extent.

This conclusion resembles the idea of "imputed righteousness," where the righteousness of Christ is imputed to believers to compensate for their imperfections. However, the similarity ends there, as those who hold this view do not extend God's grace to violations of those doctrines and practices that constitute "the pattern." Such teachings and practices, it is presumed, are not negotiable— either with God or with the brethren.

According to this view, one may be ignorant of most of God's revelation, unkind, unforgiving, and unloving— especially toward "brothers in error"— yet remain in good standing with the community of faith *if* he does not express disagreement with "the pattern" as perceived by the leaders of his particular group.

But there are additional difficulties with this legalistic approach:

First, fulfilling the "law of Christ" requires that one love all whom Christ loves in the way and to the extent that he loves them— twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, in every

thought, word, and deed. In other words, it demands that one be *precisely as he is*— **doing his will on earth in the way and to the extent that it is done in heaven—** *from the heart*. **Anything less is to be unlike God, who defines what is right and, by contrast, what is sinful by who he is.**

Secondly, to require complete compliance with the law of God as a means for being in a right relationship with him implies that one must be full-grown in order to sustain such a relationship— thus truncating the entire growth process.

When Paul says, "You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace" (Galatians 5:4), the phrase "justified by law" is not limited to the law of Moses. Rather, he is highlighting *the basis upon which justification is being sought* **to which he is calling attention.**

When one believes that his right standing with God is conditioned upon his compliance with law— any law from God — he is not seeking to be justified by grace. By seeking to make himself righteous *by being* **righteous, he has fallen away from grace, through which the righteousness of Christ is assigned to us because we have placed our faith and trust in** *his* **perfect obedience to God, not in** *our own* **imperfect effort. This is the essence of salvation by grace through faith.**

That is not to say, however, that salvation by grace through faith does not require obedience on our part. It unquestionably does if one's *faith* **is to be found genuine. It simply does not require the impossible—** *perfect* **obedience** *out of a motive of divine love*— **which God's just law demands, a requirement that Jesus has met on our behalf.**

It was because of our inability to keep God's law perfectly — for it cannot be fulfilled otherwise— that Christ was made *our* **righteousness,** *our* **holiness, and** *our* **redemption (1**

Corinthians 1:30). As Paul writes, "For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering . . . *in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us*" **(Romans 8:3–4,** *italics added*). **Paul conveys this same reality to the Corinthians when he writes: "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him** *we might become the righteousness of God*" **(2 Corinthians 5:21,** *italics added*).

The "righteous requirement of the law" is simply the righteousness of God himself— the only righteousness there is. There is no such thing as the righteousness of the Law of Moses in contrast with the righteousness of some other law from God. God's righteousness is his sinless, perfect character and the behavior that flows from that character. It is not merely the absence of any evil but the fullness of goodness. Christ was that fullness of God in a human body— "behold, a body thou hast prepared me . . . Lo, I come . . . to do thy will, O God" (Hebrews 10:5-7). He fulfilled all of God's righteousness on our behalf. For that reason, we are said to be "hidden with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3).

Praise God! He is and will *always* **be "our man in heaven"—** *always* **"our righteousness." Otherwise, we could never approach the throne of God, even on our best day. Thank God that when he looks at his children, he sees only their elder brother, who has fulfilled "all righteousness" on their behalf.**

> **"Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.** *Who is he that condemns?* **Christ Jesus, who died— more than that, who was raised to life— is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us" (Romans 8:33–34,** *italics added*).

Consequently, it may be said that unintentional failure to comply with God's law perfectly is *assumed* **(1 John 1:8), since God judges the heart, and none of his children are yet fully**

transformed into the image of his Son (2 Corinthians 3:18). Therefore, compliance with the law— or with any human interpretation of that law— is *assumed* to be imperfect. Thus, it *cannot* be used as a means of determining who is in fellowship with God or to identify those who are his children.

Finally, Ketcherside concludes that patternism arises from controversy over a legalistic interpretation of scripture— one that assumes the role of both interpreter and judge of the law. It stems from a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of the new covenant and the purpose of the new covenant scriptures.

Ketcherside on Patternism

Members of Churches of Christ have been taught that God's design was to provide in scripture a meticulous blueprint detailing every item of corporate praise and life. It has become their chief aim and duty, then, to discover its specifications and implement them in corporate practice. It is claimed that this is the only scriptural path to unity. Regarding this proposal, Ketcherside observes:

> **Unfortunately for such a postulation, candor requires an admission that it has produced the very opposite result. There are now two dozen different kinds of "Churches of Christ," and each one of these believes that it has discovered and adopted the pattern, while all of the others are either too liberal to care for it, or too ignorant to understand it.[5]**

Of course, this raises the question of which faction is "the true church?"

> **Why is it we are divided into warring tribes? Is the blueprint so obscure that it cannot be seen? Is the language so ambiguous it cannot be understood? A united chorus composed of every faction proclaims that "the way is so plain that a wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not**

err therein." Does one party have a corner on the intellectuals in the disciple brotherhood? If so, which one has collected all the brains? Are all of the honest brethren in one faction? If so, which one has all the men of integrity? Which twenty-three, or so, are composed wholly of scoundrels and reprobates?[6]

Ketcherside inquires:

> **Why are we divided over the pattern in scripture? Our strife-torn schism-ridden groups cannot answer. I suggest that the reason we are divided over the apostolic pattern is because there is none. We have been pursuing a will-o-the-wisp, a nebulous invention and figment of our own imagination. . . .**
>
> **Our problem lies in the fact that we are hooked on the blueprint idea, and because we believe it must be there we infuse it into the scriptures. Every one of our parties declares it has the blue-print, and every party has a different one. The partisans in every group have marked out a trail of passages which they have followed in journals and debates until they can cold-trail in the dark and never miss a crook or turn, and there are a lot of both![7]**

In Ketcherside's view, the entire question of *patternism* originates in *legalism* and confuses grace with law. Where there is no law or a legal basis for establishing a relationship with God, the need for patternism is never a consideration. Since he did not regard the new covenant scriptures as a code of law, Ketcherside concluded that they do not contain a blueprint for everything we do in our institutional life. In his own words:

> **It was never the revealed intention of God to provide for us a meticulous bill of specifications covering every facet of procedure, and the attempt to convert the new covenant scriptures into such a code of particulars has warped and thwarted the divine purpose.[8]**

Yet Ketcherside's regard for the scriptures as inspired,

infallible, and thus normative is beyond question.

> **Let us get one point clear at the outset. We believe the apostolic letters contain a revelation of the will of God. We believe their message is a transmission of the Holy Spirit. We neither doubt nor question the authenticity or genuineness of these writings. To us, they are the *sacred scriptures* as opposed to all other writings of men. It is essential that we understand this because, in the eyes of many, to question the use they make of the scriptures, is to question their divine origin. We affirm that the scriptures are divine with the same boldness that we deny that the application of them as made by our brethren is inspired. In short, we believe in the infallibility of God's revelation, but we do not believe in the infallibility of any human interpretation.[9]**

Nevertheless, Ketcherside insists that what he writes is not offered in a dogmatic or arbitrary sense: "The word of God, and not *Mission Messenger*, should be our court of appeal."

While it may be assumed that all are eager to understand and obey the will of God, disagreement over what constitutes *the pattern* has produced a pattern of continued division among heirs of the Stone-Campbell Movement. Although each party claims that unity is achievable if the word of God is taken for what it says, what they actually mean is: Unity is achievable *if others* take the word of God for what *our party* says it means. Those who reject the meaning assigned by their party are deemed either dishonest or lacking the intellectual ability to understand the pattern.

As Ketcherside quipped, "There are two things the brethren cannot tolerate. One is to deny there is a pattern; the other to affirm that anyone else is following it."[10]

With regard to the *pattern* philosophy of interpretation,

Ketcherside goes on to observe:

> **If we look upon the new covenant scriptures as a code of laws we must have an official interpreter, for no law can be adapted to cases which come before it unless someone rules upon the applicability of the law and the degree of culpability involved in the alleged infraction. This is what has happened. Each party has made its interpretation official and regards it as infallible. The party interpretation has become the will of God. Partisan traditions are accepted as precedents by which to judge contemporary problems. Thus division is multiplied, and strife increased.[11]**

In practice, each party believes its interpretation is infallible, and those who do not concur with the party's exegesis as not understanding the Bible at all; they must be marked and expelled from the group. In each instance *the pattern* is the partisan interpretation— equated with the will of God— and thus becomes a test of spiritual fellowship. This is creedalism in its classic form.

In examining the sources of our patterns, Ketcherside highlights the twenty-five different "patterns" among Churches of Christ, noting that each group is thoroughly convinced that theirs alone is *the* New Testament *pattern*. He then observes:

> **The absurdity of men standing up and quoting the same passages and finding justification for their varied and opposite views while proclaiming that the Word is so plain that even a blind man can see it, seems lost upon everyone except those thinking persons who are outside our movement.[12]**

When men believe that God provided a specific detailed pattern, they feel compelled to find one for everything. To fail would be to charge God with neglect or imperfection. After all, Moses was told to build everything "according to the pattern" shown him in the mount. Consequently, it is believed that we

must construct the new tabernacle according to the pattern found within the pages of the New Testament.

The fundamental error in such thinking, however, is that, unlike Moses, we have not been authorized to build anything according to any pattern. *We are* **"the true tabernacle set up** *by the Lord*, *not* **by man" (Hebrews 8:2).** *We are* **the temple built by God himself! Our heart is the holy place of his dwelling. There is no pattern** *because* **there remains nothing for man to construct.**

The singular work of church leadership is to prepare God's people to be servants of others. The body will then be built up "as each part does its work"— growing "as God *causes* **it to grow" in the love which he supplies, since "love is** *from* **God" (Ephesians 4:12, 16; Colossians 2:19; 1 John 4:7).**

Ketcherside concluded that our patterns have been derived from three sources:

1. **Cultural and environmental factors**
2. **Reactions to other religious groups whom we consider as apostates or compromisers**
3. **Misconception and misapplication of scriptural passages lifted from their contextual setting and used to establish our preconceptions and presuppositions.**[13]

Ketcherside relates that in earlier years, tracts were written and debates held on such topics as "The Posture of Prayer," for which command, apostolic example, and necessary inference were found— requiring men to kneel in prayer. When it came time to take up an offering, restoration congregations avoided passing the hat or the plate, as that was done by the sects. Instead, all would march up to the front and lay their offerings on the Lord's Table.

When it was later suggested that, in a large congregation, it

would be more orderly to simply pass a plate, one brother stood his ground, saying he was perfectly willing to abide by the scriptural pattern:

> My Bible says upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store. Where is him? Him is Christ, and his body is on the table. My advice is to continue to lay by him. If God had wanted a hat passed, he would undoubtedly have said so, for they had hats when Jesus was on the earth.[14]

In opposition to the introduction of Bible classes into the educational program of the local church, one brother was convinced that Ephesians 2:6 was a direct command that we sit together and not divide the assembly: "But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us . . . hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places." It was obvious to him that Paul was here laying down a principle that made it sinful to have classes. "Heavenly places," he argued, referred to houses of worship, where God ordained that we sit together— not in separate classes!

Ketcherside concludes:

> We are coming to see that, in many cases, the pattern we have espoused is not derived from the sacred scriptures at all. It is merely an unwritten creed, hallowed by usage and hardened by debate. As the Word is read and searched through eyes from which the scales have fallen, there will dawn on the consciousness of students that the whole so-called pattern for our two dozen minor sects has been conjured up in the imaginations of men, being read into the scriptures rather than found in them.[15]

Ketcherside on Our Patterns

Before examining specific patterns used in modern restoration churches, it is helpful first to consider an argument

used to support at least one of them.

The Authority of Silence

Among the various philosophies of interpretation, two have created an apparently irreconcilable division within the Stone-Campbell Movement. This division exists between people who equally respect the authority of scripture but, due to their interpretive philosophies, can never see eye to eye. These seemingly incompatible approaches relate to what the Bible does *not* say.

While some regard the silence of scripture as restrictive, others see it as non-restrictive. One party believes that God disallows everything he has not specifically mentioned or authorized. The other holds that when God leaves a blank (silence) in scripture, he does not intend for us to speculate on what he meant by his silence and then fill in the blank for everyone else. Instead, they believe God's silence indicates his indifference, leaving such matters to individual discretion.

In his book, *In the Beginning*, Ketcherside writes about the point at which the first *formal* division within the movement was acknowledged in the U.S. Census:

> **In 1906 actual division occurred and was recognized. It became a formal thing. The organ was blamed for it, but the division would have occurred if there had been no organ. Men had thought division. It had been preached from the pulpit. It was urged upon men as the will of God. The organ was visible. It could be seen. It was tangible. It could be felt. Men could vent their spleen against it. They did so by literally chopping the offending instrument into bits and throwing the pieces into the backyard. But the rancor existed in human hearts before it was overtly declared.**

Slowly there had developed two approaches to interpretation of the Word of God. They were opposed to each other. One said that anything not specifically mentioned in the scriptures was acceptable provided that it did not violate any other scripture. The other said that anything not specifically mentioned in the scriptures was prohibited by the silence of the scriptures. An elaborate argument about the silence was worked out. These two ideas were destined for a crash because they were on a collision course. They met at the point where the instrument was introduced and disaster was the result.

The peculiar thing is that the Bible did not enjoin either of these presuppositions. No one who spoke where the Bible spoke, or remained silent where it was silent, could utter either one. Both had to be siphoned out by the dubious prooftext method which consisted of taking wholly unrelated passages and from them weaving a fabric favorable to a foregone conclusion. Both of them were spectacles donned before reading the scripture. By wearing them only one result could be achieved.

And so occurred once more what Thomas Campbell called "the heinous nature and pernicious tendency of religious controversy among Christians." Debates were held. History was searched. The revelation of heaven was meticulously gone over with a fine tooth comb. Not one organ was ever debated out. And the reason is that the organ was not the real criminal. We did not divide when the organ was introduced, and we would not unite if it were taken out.

We divided when we quit loving each other as brethren. We will unite again when we resume loving one another. The question is whether we want to win a debate or a brother. "By this will all men know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." Love makes no demands. It assesses no requirements. It stipulates no conditions and requires no proof. It does not say that if you give up this or that I will love you. It loves you where

> **you are and as you are. If you have something which hinders the closer walk you give it up, but you will be loved if you never give it up.[16]**

In 1972, Ketcherside again wrote about the silence of scripture in response to the question, "Does not the authority of silence forbid the use of instrumental music?"

> **There is no such thing as the authority of silence as a law or code for the body of Christ. The only authority silence has is for the conscience of the individual. It can never be bound upon another, for to do this one would have to speak, and when you do this it is what you speak that is bound and not the silence.**
>
> **Silence may be respected but cannot be made authoritative for the simple reason that no one knows why God refrains from speaking in a given instance. To assume that by not mentioning a thing he always intends to forbid it is sheer conjecture. God has no authoritative spokesman to fill in the blanks or to supply the missing information. Those who speak about the authority of silence are always inconsistent and must employ casuistry, since they all have some things God has not specifically mentioned or authorized. No one who makes the argument can ever really live by it, for he makes what God has not said as important as what he did say.[17]**

The truth is, we do not *know* why God was silent about many things, and this prevents us from predicating *authority* on his silence— as if we did know. It is simply impossible to *obey* silence. While we may respect it, we cannot obey it unless we impose a meaning that could be disobeyed. One cannot bind upon others what he *thinks* God meant by what he did *not* say.

Of course, the "law of silence" is based on the false assumption that God provided a meticulous blueprint for first-century believers, which inherently begs the question of the patternism's legitimacy. Furthermore, it cannot be a "law" since

it is not found in scripture. The church is built upon what the apostles revealed, not upon what they did not say. In the end, the so-called law of silence is a human deduction presented as a divine precept.

Our Supper Pattern

In his essay "The Supper Pattern," Ketcherside recounts the experience of an American evangelist who visited a congregation of saints in another country on during the celebration of the Lord's Supper:

> **When the Lord's table was uncovered he saw that it contained a small loaf of leavened bread. He was undecided as to whether he should partake of it, because he had always been accustomed to unleavened bread on the table. That afternoon he voiced his feelings in the home of one of the elders, pointing out that Jesus chose unleavened bread. The elder informed him that Jesus did not have a choice. The Lord's Supper was ordained in conjunction with the Passover which ushered in the feast of unleavened bread. During this time Jewish families ate unleavened bread as their staple diet. Jesus simply took the kind of bread they ate at their regular meals and consecrated it. The elder pointed out that they followed the example of Jesus and used the kind of bread that was used in their ordinary meals.**
>
> **Tradition is a powerful force in moulding religious practice. So the preacher pointed out that Jesus took unleavened bread and we should do the same. It was quickly pointed out to him that when Jesus or the apostles spoke of the bread they used the word *artos*, which means a loaf, leavened or unleavened. They did not once use the word *azumos*, which is the Greek for "unleavened" in any of their instructions relative to the Supper. Jesus used unleavened bread because he was a Jew. This was the only bread at hand. To argue that no one can observe the feast**

acceptably while eating leavened bread is to impeach the standing of thousands of God's children in the world, as well as to set up as a law that which was an incidental feature. The family should not be divided into a "leavened bread party" and an "unleavened bread party." Such factionalism is a sin.

Speaking of sin reminds us that some are so careless as to state that the Jews ate unleavened bread at the Passover because leaven was a type of sin. This is not the case at all. Unleavened bread was used to remind the people only of the haste in which they fled Egypt. "They baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought out of Egypt, for it was not leavened, because they were thrust out of Egypt and could not tarry" (Exodus 12:39). Moses declared, "You shall eat no leavened bread with it; seven days you shall eat it with unleavened bread, the bread of affliction— for you came out of the land of Egypt in hurried flight— that all the days of your life you may remember the day when you came out of the land of Egypt" (Deut. 16:3). Unleavened bread had a special relevance to the Jewish passover. It has none to the Lord's Supper.[18]

Ketcherside points out that this illustrates how honest men divide over what they think is involved in "the rigid pattern concept of the new covenant scriptures." This is particularly important because the Supper was meant to be a witness to our oneness. Through it, we give constant testimony to faith, hope, and love— a visible expression of the unity of the one body.

Ketcherside observes that insisting on the use of unleavened bread and a single container assumes that the historical account of Jesus' actions was meant to constitute a meticulous legal procedure binding upon Christians for all times and places— a criterion for judging the spiritual worthiness of others. Yet none of the postulates supporting such claims can be proven by a single passage from the new covenant scriptures. They reflect a philosophy of interpretation based upon

rationalization and presupposition— a philosophy which is applied inconsistently.

For example, the fact that Jesus sat while preaching and opened his eyes while praying is simply ignored, yet the use of unleavened bread— never explicitly commanded— is insisted upon. Meanwhile, direct commands for practices such as foot-washing and the holy kiss are glibly explained away.

The basic fallacy in this philosophy is the assumption that the new covenant scriptures were *intended* as a written code of legalistic procedure to be applied irrespective of circumstances — without regard for mercy. To show mercy, however, is to condemn the entire philosophy. Forcing human deductions to the point of division is not fidelity to God but a failure to understand the divine purpose.

Ketcherside insists that our task is not to impose laws governing the Supper but to live up to the love it embodies and embraces.

Our Money Pattern

During the 1960s, a division arose over how the church was authorized to spend its money. It was generally assumed that the "New Testament pattern" not only authorized the creation and maintenance of a church treasury but regulated how such funds could be used— limiting their use for things that fell under what was defined as "the work of the church."

Based on that presupposition, it was maintained, among other things, that the pattern excluded the use of church funds to relieve the suffering of those outside the "Church of Christ," except to support an evangelist in sharing the gospel with them. Only if they became obedient to the gospel would they be entitled to receive financial assistance for physical necessities.

This doctrine became known as "Saints Only."[19]

Regarding the controversy over institutionalism, Ketcherside writes:

> **Preachers on both sides believe they are in harmony with God's plan and purpose, and that the scriptures authorize what they are doing. Both sides profess to be able to give "chapter and verse" for their position, and frequently they both give the same "chapter and verse." Not being allied with either faction it is possible for me to look at all of these struggling brethren with a great deal of compassion, and to assess the real problem without the emotional involvement.**
>
> **A perceptive observer will soon recognize that the whole thing centers around how a community of saints may spend its money, and I am quite convinced that the real hang-up stems from a mistaken view of both groups over what constitutes worship of God. Both believe that worship has been reduced to a series of acts performed on the first day of the week, one of which consists of giving money into an institutional treasury to be dispensed by certain functionaries without consent, or even approval of the expenditures by the contributors.**[20]

Ketcherside continues:

> **I trust it will not shock you if I say that the entire thing may be a mere cobweb constructed of gauzy filaments of human imagination. In the first place the word "worship" is never once applied by the scriptures to anything we do on the Lord's Day morning. The term "acts of worship" is not in the Bible. The word of God knows nothing of the expression "the worship." It was dreamed up to designate a legalistic arrangement of which the Holy Spirit said not one word. The idea of "five items of worship" as the divine plan, has been sucked out of a factional thumb.**

Pursuing the thought further, the concept of a public collection from the members of the body every Sunday is based upon an interpretation which may be as full of holes as a sieve. It results from taking a specific instruction for meeting a historic emergency, and elevating it to a general and universal law, which is then bound as the will of God on a weekly basis.[21]

After quoting 1 Corinthians 16:1–4, Ketcherside elaborates on the tradition derived from these instructions and then challenges the exegesis upon which it is based:

Out of this has grown a whole flock of assumptions which have been bound as dogmatic requirements. The giving of money every Sunday is an act of worship, or one of the "five items of worship." It is a sin to take up a collection at any gathering of the saints other than on the Lord's Day. Everyone is under command to give or he will be judged as falling short of his duty. There must be a "church treasury" and a "church treasurer." Money placed in the "church treasury" cannot be expended on the needs of "outsiders" but must be given only to the saints.

I challenge this whole system as a creedal fabrication read into God's word. It is a clearcut example of what happens when men institutionalize the work of God. I want to deal with this doctrine which has been devised, openly and without fear of what men shall do unto me. I want my readers to see how easy it is to be brainwashed by tradition.

This was a special collection. It was *the* collection for *the* saints at Jerusalem.[22]

Ketcherside then raises several questions about the traditional view that taking up a weekly collection is a required act of worship:

If this was an "item of worship" why did the apostle not bind it upon these congregations when he planted

them? Why did he let them go for several years without saying a word about "systematic giving," and then only mention it when a special occasion arose? Do you realize that there is not even a hint that the congregation at Corinth ever "passed the hat" from the time they began meeting until they received the apostolic letter? Do you realize that everything they collected was turned over to Paul and his co-laborers to be taken directly to Jerusalem? Do you know there is not even a suggestion that they ever collected another penny after this time?

A lot of my brethren are great advocates of "the authority of silence." If God specifies a thing there must be no deviation, no addition, no substitution. Now, nothing is clearer than the fact that 1 Corinthians 16:1-4 specifies that the collection laid by in store upon the first day of the week was for the poor saints, and was to be taken to Jerusalem. On what ground can men justify taking part of the money which they affirm is collected under this specification, and use it to purchase elaborate meetinghouses, parsonages, automobiles, and just about any other thing they want. Don't write and give me "the line" that is used to explain it. I already know the whole casuistic bit! But brethren who can parlay "poor saints" to include a million dollar building, landscaping, and a minister's salary, ought to have no trouble getting one "little instrument" into singing. The fact is that the argument on silence can always be bent to include what we want to get into it, and then snapped back to flip out what we do not want. There is nothing in all of our history which has been quite so downright deceitful as the so-called "law of silence." The "law of exclusion" always exempts what we have or want.

The truth is that there never was a command of God to place money in a "church treasury." The word "order" is from *diatasso*, to appoint, arrange, enjoin, charge, etc. As Albert Barnes puts it so succinctly, "It does not mean that he had the authority to *tax* them, or that he had commanded them to make a collection. But that he had left

directions as to the best *manner* and *time* in which it should be done. The collection was voluntary and cheerful in all the churches."

Writing about the very same matter, Paul says plainly, "I speak not by commandment" (2 Corinthians 8:8). In spite of this, I was taught all of my life that we are commanded to lay by in store every Sunday. Actually, the collection of which Paul wrote was a spontaneous desire of the givers. He simply wrote to tell them the best way to take care of the matter. "For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution of the poor saints which are at Jerusalem" (Romans 15:26). If this was a "certain contribution" which the brethren determined to send, on what grounds do men reason that it was a perpetual and continuous practice to take up a contribution?

Paul said that the brethren in Macedonia actually prayed him with much entreaty to receive the gift, and take upon him the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. There probably never was a contribution taken except to meet a need, and the people who contributed knew in advance what the need was and gave to meet it. All of this talk about "giving of your means" every Sunday as a legalistic requirement of heaven and to build up a bank account for the institution is just so much froth dreamed up by the religious Establishment for the perpetuation of its own image! Don't get fighting mad at that until you think awhile.[23]

Regarding a "church treasury," Ketcherside writes:

It has always been assumed that Paul was instructing the brethren to bring money to a public gathering each Lord's Day and hand it in to be placed in "the church treasury." This is not as certain as many preachers would like to make it sound. The book says for each one to "lay by him" in store. The Greek for "by him" is *par eauto*, and indicates that the laying by is to be done

at home. *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon*, **plainly says, "by him, that is, at his home."** *Green's Lexicon* **just as plainly puts it, "with one's self, at his home." The term is closely associated to the original in John 20:10, "Then the disciples went away again unto** *their own home*."

Faced with the overwhelming evidence of the original term, the commentators have generally sought to be honest in explaining the passages in the light of the apparent meaning. This is so in spite of the traditions of the religious world, and in spite of the questions that are sometimes raised. I propose to give you the result of a little of my own research, although time and space will not permit of my going into the matter thoroughly.[24]

Ketcherside then quotes at length from Charles Hodge, D.D., in his *Commentary on First Corinthians*. **Hodge, after acknowledging that most commentators interpret the "treasuring up" a private affair at home, objects to the majority view.**[25] **To Hodge's objection, Peter Lange replied:**

This is well argued in behalf of the solemn observance of the Lord's Day; but we can no more change the meaning of *par eauto* **than we can parallel phrases in other languages. They are idiomatic expressions for "at home" and honestly require that we should so interpret. This is the rendering which even the ancient Syria version gives it.**[26]

In addition to these commentators, Ketcherside quotes from John Chrysostom (c. 375 A.D.) in his *Forty-third Homily on First Corinthians*. **He then cites nine English translations of 1 Corinthians 16:1–4, all of which suggest that each member of the church in Corinth was to set aside something at home, saving it for the collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem.**[27]

Ketcherside concludes with several observations:

Whether we like it or not, there is not one indication

anywhere in the sacred scriptures, that any congregation of saints ever took up a public contribution every Sunday. Obviously the congregations in Galatia and Corinth did not take up an offering when Paul planted them, or for several years afterwards, and then the language used indicates that individuals simply laid up a sum privately each week, and kept it until the apostle came, when they turned the whole amount they had saved over to him to take to the relief of the poor saints for whom they had been laying by their weekly sums.

In spite of this I was taught as a child, and even taught it myself as I grew older, that all of our giving had to be done "through the church." We were even led to believe that if there was a needy person in the community, we should give our contributions for relief into the treasury and let it be dispensed from it "so the church could get the glory." Sometimes, after we put it in, the brethren would not pay it out. The church wanted the money more than it wanted the glory. We were told that it was a sin to take up a contribution on any other day of the week than Sunday, and we advertised this fact in the newspapers to prove our loyalty. Of course, we could bring clothes for orphans on Wednesday night, but not money. How silly can you get?[28]

While Ketcherside acknowledges that collecting weekly offerings on Sunday and appointing a treasurer funds is not sinful, he insists that it has no New Testament precedent:

What I am saying is that it is an outgrowth of human rationalization and has no more direct scriptural warrant than a lot of other things that we do. To declare that this was a heavenly program, properly prepared on high and presented to us in the sacred scriptures as the divine *law* for giving money is just not true. And to threaten men and women with hell because they prefer to put their funds where human needs are evident, rather than in the institutional bank account, is as bad as popery in its blackest moments.[29]

He further explains:

> **What I am saying is that we should quit saying that "passing the plate" for money every Sunday is the divine pattern. We should stop the silly and inane statement that this is "a prescribed item of worship." What we are doing is reading into the scriptures what we are already practicing, and while the thing we are doing is not wrong, it is certainly wrong to misuse and misapply the scriptures. We ought not to wrest the scriptures to sustain even what is right.**[30]

Our Name Pattern

In his early years, while doing personal work in Red Cloud, Nebraska, and inviting residents to the nightly meetings at which he was speaking, Ketcherside realized he needed printed material to leave with those he visiting to clearly distinguish the true church from the sects. He writes:

> **It appeared obvious that the quickest and best way to do this was to point out the difference in the religious titles which we wore. Anyone who was not too blind to read a signboard could see that we were the Church of Christ, and could as readily determine that no one else was. It was all very simple. Those who met behind our signboard were in Christ. They belonged to him! Those who met behind other signboards were not in Christ, but had been captured by Satan.**
>
> **So I wrote and had printed a tract under the heading, "Whose Name Shall the Bride Wear?" It became very popular indeed with those who thought they were the bride. . . . Several years later I came to realize that what I was doing was actually more sectarian than those whom I was seeking to reach. Like a flash out of the blue it dawned upon me that the called out ones had no official title, no party name. To promote and defend such a title was**

simply to make a denomination out of the group of believers who appropriated it and trusted in it.

The very word denominate, from the Latin *de* and *nominare*, to call by a name, means "to give a name to; designate by a name or title; to call by a distinctive name or designation." Any group which selects and appropriates to itself a specific name, title or brand, is a denomination, whether the title it selects is from words found in the Bible, or composed of words not even mentioned in the sacred volume. The source of the title has nothing to do with the act of denominating, and any group which denominates itself is a denomination. Since it thus segments itself it is also a sect.

The *ekklesia* of God had no specific name in its inception. The saints were corporately designated only by simple nouns. All of these describe a relationship. Not a one was used as an exclusive title. This is obvious, or there would have been only one. As to functional unity they were the body of Christ, as to divine origin the churches of God, as to present authority the churches of Christ. In relation to government, they constituted the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God, or the kingdom of God's dear Son. In relation to heritage, they were the church of the firstborn ones whose names were enrolled in heaven.

To select any one of these terms such as church of God, church of the firstborn, or church of Christ, and make it the means of identification for a specific group in the realm of believers in the Messiah is to create a denomination, by the act of denominating that group. And to do it in order to define boundaries and to separate those Christians under the title from others who are not under it is the very essence of sectarianism.[31]

In this same essay, Ketcherside notes that some Churches of Christ attempt to avoid the appearance of sectarianism by using a lower case "c" in the spelling of "church of Christ." He observes that sectarianism is an attitude of heart, not an

accident of spelling. He further notes that the term "Church of Christ" (singular) is not to be found in scripture. He explains that:

> **The nearest we can come to it is "The Churches of Christ salute you" (Romans 16:16). But in the very same chapter the writer mentions "the churches of the Gentiles." He apparently refers to the same people. But I have yet to see a sign in front of one of our edifices reading, "The churches of the Gentiles" (Romans 16:4).[32]**

With regard to objections, Ketcherside first examines the contention that Jesus said, "I will build *my* church." Since it is his church, it should bear his name.

> **But did not Jesus say, "Upon this rock I will build my church?" Indeed, he said it and he did it. It is his church. But this statement only shows possession. It says not one thing about the name of that church. It tells us to whom the church belongs but provides no name for it except the simple noun "church." If I say, "Upon this lot I will park my car," you know to whom the car belongs but you do not know its name. You could not tell whether it was a Ford, Chevrolet or Plymouth.**
>
> **And that is just the point. There is only one church. There never will be another. The church is a divine creation and not a human organization. A man can no more make another church than he can make another Holy Spirit. "There is one body and one Spirit." The church does not need to engage in the identification race with sects. It does not belong in that category. When it gets hooked on the signboard hang-up it gets on the sectarian level. The church on the rock is not "The Church of Christ" down the street from "The Baptist Church" or up the street from "The Presbyterian Church." It is the whole body of called-out believers in the community.**
>
> **The body of Christ, the kingdom of God's dear Son, is not the church in town which *does not* have an**

instrument, or *does not* have classes, or *does not* have individual cups, or *does not* contribute to Herald of Truth. The body of Christians in any locality is made up of every saved person in that area. It is not the church of God because of what it does not have, but because of what it does have.[33]

In an earlier tract, Ketcherside himself argued that the bride of Christ, the church, should wear the name of her husband. In response to that argument, he writes:

> **The whole argument falls as flat as a Swedish pancake when one realizes that the idea of a wife being called by the name of her husband is a product of western culture. And it is of relatively modern origin. Even now it is not the custom in many parts of the world.**
>
> **Certainly such an idea is foreign to the Bible. In both the old and new covenant scriptures wives were called by their own names. Thus we read of Sarai, Abraham's wife; Rachel, Jacob's wife; Joanna, the wife of Chuza; Felix, and his wife Drusilla. No one ever reads of Mrs. Zechariah, or of Mrs. Aquila.**
>
> **Even if the bride wore the name of her husband, the term "church of Christ" would not be that name. Christ is not the name of our Lord. It is his office or prophetic function. He is Jesus *the* Christ. He is the Christ because he was *christed*, or anointed, just as John the Baptist was so designated because he baptized. When you read of Simon the tanner, you do not think of tanner as being his last name. You certainly would not call his wife "Mrs. Tanner." Nor would you have addressed the wife of Simon the leper as "Mrs. Leper."**[34]

He later adds:

> **Actually, of course, if you want to be really technical, the church is not yet married to the Lamb. And when the wedding feast occurs, she will not be called Mrs.**

Lamb. John places the wedding at the close of events as we now know them. "For the marriage of the Lamb is come and his wife hath made herself ready" (Rev. 19:7). When the ceremony begins the bride will be attired in white linen made up of the righteousness of the saints. I am helping work on the trousseau now, although I am not too good at it, and God's grace will have to unravel a lot of my errors. But I am looking forward to the event for, "Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb." That is one banquet I do not want to miss.[35]

Ketcherside states, "The whole sectarian mess created by vain wranglings about names, opinions and words, is as abhorrent to me as I think it is to God." He then follows with a quote from Alexander Campbell regarding those who consider themselves God's people to the exclusion of all others:

> **Dear sir, this plan of making our own nest and fluttering over our own brood; of building our own tent, and of confining all goodness and grace to our noble selves and the "elect few" who are like us, is the quintessence of sublimated pharisaism.**
>
> **The old Pharisees were but babes in comparison to the modern: and the longer I live, and the more I reflect upon God and man— heaven and earth— the Bible and the world— the Redeemer and his church— the more I am assured that all sectarianism is the offspring of hell; and that all differences about words, and names, and opinions, hatched in Egypt, or Rome, or Edinburgh, are like the frolics of drunken men; and that where there is a *new creature,* or a society of them with all their imperfections and frailties, and errors in sentiment, in views, and opinions, they ought to receive one another, and the strong to support the weak, and not to please themselves.**
>
> **To lock ourselves up in the bandbox of our own little circle; to associate with a few units, tens, or hundreds, as the pure church, as the elect, is real Protestant monkery, it is evangelical pharisaism.[36]**

Ketcherside then includes a quote from G. C. Brewer's lecture at Abilene Christian College, in which Brewer makes reference to the various names by which the church is identified in scripture:

> **"To exalt any one of these into** *the patented name of the church* **is to sectarianize that expression. If we have not done that very thing with the expression** *church of Christ* **then why do we not vary our terms in speaking of the church?"**[37]

Our Worship Pattern

On at least two occasions, Carl Ketcherside has defined worship. One such definition appears in his 1974 essay, "One God:"

> **Worship is the prostration of the heart in his presence and since he is ever present, whatever I do in word or deed is worship. I do not go to a temple. I am a temple. I do not pay a pilgrimage to the place where God dwells. I am a place where God dwells. It is not that I bring him things. I simply give him me! And he gives me himself. That's worship.**[38]

An earlier definition is found in his 1966 essay, "Worship and Money:"

> **Worship is not the mere performance of acts. It is not engaging in a prescribed ritual. Worship is the prostration of the heart, filled with a sense of dependency, before the presence of God. It is tuning the soul to vibrate in harmony with the infinite, the reaching out of the hands of the inner self to draw God close and to draw close to God. We do not worship because we sing; we sing because we worship. We do not worship because we pray; we pray because we worship. Worship is the fountain of the great deep within us. Singing and prayer are two of the vessels**

which draw the water to the surface. There are many different vessels, and the true worshiper reaches for the one which best suits his need of the hour.

Public praise and community sharing in the expression of worship may be regulated by calendar and clock, but the true worship is always that of the true worshiper. It is constant and consistent. It is the breathing of the spirit of one who is dead and whose life is hid with Christ in God; the palpitation of the inner heart of one in whom Christ dwells as a royal tenant in a frail tenement of clay. To such a person there is no distinction between what is God's and what is his. All artificial distinctions between secular and sacred are broken down and wafted away upon the winds of the Spirit.[39]

In his 1966 essay, "Acts of Worship," Ketcherside opens with the following:

Let us preface our remarks by reminding our readers that nothing which we do when we assemble on the Lord's Day is ever referred to as "worship" in the new covenant scriptures. The expression "the worship" is not in the Christian scriptures. It is true that, in our day, a ritual has been devised which is designated "the five acts of worship," but neither the language nor the idea signified by it, is found in God's revelation. It has been created and fabricated by the dubious method of searching out isolated passages and from them weaving a pattern of action which is then deemed to be the revealed mode of acceptable worship of the Father.

In the language of Jesus and in the practice of the primitive saints every thought, word and deed, engaged in by those in Christ, out of a sense of reverence for God, was an expression of worship. There was no distinction between the spiritual and the secular. There was no specific ritual unvaryingly observed for the simple reason that the whole body was offered as a living sacrifice and whatever was done in the body was worship. One did not

go in and out of Christ, and everything performed was offered to him as a part of the life of the fellowship.[40]

Ketcherside's most extensive treatment of worship is perhaps his 1966 essay, "Holy Places and Days." He introduces his thesis by recounting in detail his earliest experiences of assembling with the saints in the humble settings of his youth. He then continues:

> **I've written all of this to tell you again that any place where God touches a human life is holy ground, and that no place is a sanctuary merely because it is a place. The outstanding feature of early Christianity was its recognition that all one had was God's when the heart was given to God. Any house was the Lord's house when the Lord's people were there. The common expression was "the church which is in thy house." The table of the Lord was the family table, and it was the table of the Lord simply because he was Lord of the table. No building was sacred because none was secular.**
>
> **There was no "worship service" because all service was worship. The husband who loved his wife as his own body was worshiping God and so was the wife who reverenced her own husband. One who worked quietly for his living was fulfilling an appeal made in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thes. 3:12). Those who gave to charity with all their heart and those who cheerfully helped others in distress were using gifts allotted by God's grace as certainly as those who publicly prophesied, taught or exhorted (Romans 12:6-8). C. F. D. Moule in *Worship in the New Testament*, writes, "Christian worship is indeed service— hard work— but it is the responsive service of obedience and gratitude, not of flattery or of 'mutual benefit.'"**
>
> **Service to humanity, the relief of human suffering, the supplying of human need— this was the greatest expression of worship. Even before Christ came the prophets caught the vision of the real liturgy of life. Isaiah,**

in his dissertation on the kind of service God chooses, pointedly reveals that it is not fasting to quarrel and fight, to bow the head like a reed in the wind, or to spread sackcloth and ashes under one. "Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?" (Isaiah 58:6-7).

Jesus refused to allow even the law of the sabbath to take precedence over humanitarian principle. When his hungry disciples plucked ears of grain and were censured by the Pharisees for such unlawful action, he cited them to the case of David "when he was in need and was hungry." David "entered the house of God, ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him." Then our Lord laid down a principle of such magnitude that most of those who profess to be his followers even now are still stunned by it. "The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath." He then added, "So the Son of man is lord *even* of the sabbath."

Note that word "even." To the Pharisees the attitude toward the sabbath was the test of one's loyalty to God. Jesus repeatedly and habitually broke the sabbath law as they interpreted it. He showed that the need of man took precedence over law since law was given for the good of man. Keeping the sabbath was a part of ritualistic religion but relief of human need was an expression of worship, that is reverence for God, the pure and undefiled religion. The point is that our compassion and mercy must be as full and free and as continuous as that of God. No day must ever be made an excuse for withholding aid that may be provided. Nothing must ever become more hallowed than the provision for suffering humanity.[41]

Regarding holy days, Ketcherside continues:

Of course, in the Christian concept, there are no special days. There can be no holy days for the simple reason that there are no unholy ones. In the primitive community of saints Sunday was not a taboo day. L. Duchesne says in his *Origin of Christian Worship*:

> **The idea of imparting to the Sunday the solemnity of the Sabbath, with all its exigencies and in particular its prohibition of work, was an entirely foreign one to the early Christians.[42]**

As Ketcherside observes, many of the primitive Christians were slaves and had to work a full day in the fields on Sunday. For this reason, according to Tertullian, the Lord's Supper was taken in assemblies before daybreak. In this regard, he quotes from *Christian Worship in the Primitive Church* by A. B. MacDonald:

> **The choice of the early morning hour would be dictated largely by the fact that most worshipers were busy people and had their day's work to do as usual.[43]**

Along this same line of thought, Ketcherside quotes Augustus Neander in *History of the Training and Planting of the Christian Church*:

> **On the standing-point of the gospel, the whole life became in an equal manner related to God, and served to glorify him, and thenceforth no opposition existed between what belonged to God and what belonged to the world. Thus all the days of the Christian life must be equally holy to the Lord; hence Paul says to the Galatian Christians . . . "After that ye have known God, or rather (by his pitying love) have been led to the knowledge of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" . . . The apostle does not here oppose the Christian feasts to the Jewish, but he considers the whole reference of religion to certain days as something foreign to the exalted standing-point of**

Christian freedom, and belonging to that of Judaism and Heathenism.[44]

Finally, in this same regard, Ketcherside quotes from *The Early Years of Christianity,* **written by E. De Pressense:**

> **There is no apostolic decree or episcopal ordinance appointing the celebration of the first day of the week any more than the watch-days or the hours of devotion. Sunday is the offspring of Christian liberty, not the inheritance of Jewish bondage.**[45]

Ketcherside then adds:

> **This makes some of our "sacred cows" look silly as sacred cows always do. Think of the signboards reading: "9:45 a.m., Bible Study; 10:45 a.m., Worship; 11:45 a.m., Communion." The more orthodox brethren, driven to extremes by those who oppose classes, have sought to avoid their charges by neatly arranged compartments, so they can argue that the Bible study ends before the worship begins. What is "the worship"? Where do those who speak where the Bible speaks find any such idea in the sacred scriptures? Do we not study the word together out of reverence for the Author? Then it is an expression of worship. Not only is Bible Study part of "our worship" but so is getting the children up, bathing them, dressing them, preparing breakfast and returning thanks, driving to the place where the saints assemble and waving a friendly hand to the neighbors along the way. We do not start worshiping "when the bell rings."**
>
> **When we once grow up in the Lord, we will learn that Bible study, prayer, singing, contributing to needs, visiting the sick, plowing corn for a crippled neighbor or taking flowers to a shut-in, are all part of our "communion" and there is no such thing as the communion, although there is a communion of the body and blood of the Lord. We do not observe it; we participate in it. That is why it is a communion instead of a**

mere ritual.

> **Jesus only once gave a picture of the final judgment and in it he provided the basis for acceptance or rejection. It had nothing to do with liturgy, litany, rubric or ritual. Ceremonials and sacraments were not even mentioned. Those who received the Father's blessing, who were invited to possess the kingdom that had been made ready for such as themselves since the world was made, were those who had fed the hungry, given drink to the thirsty, received strangers, clothed the naked, helped the sick, and visited those in prison. This is the real test of true worship, not the kind that is rendered at a certain mountain or in a certain city, but that which is in spirit and truth (reality).**[46]

In this context, Ketcherside tells of a Church of Christ that once sent purebred bulls and cows to Korea for breeding and paid specialists in animal husbandry to accompany them to assist the native people in improving their herds. As a result, they were accused of forsaking the gospel of Christ for the "social gospel." Ketcherside remarks:

> **Since I am simply a Christian and a Christian only, I am looked upon with suspicion as "a brother in error" by both the "cow party" and the "anti-cow party." This is good because it makes me free in Christ to say what I honestly think. I have nothing to lose but my soul. This gives me a tremendous advantage. Since in Christ Jesus there can be no separation between secular and sacred, it remains that the only thing which is secular is sin!**[47]

Observing that the time of the American missionary is growing short, Ketcherside comments:

> **A schoolteacher in a native village, a doctor in a remote clinic, a visiting nurse in native huts, and expert in soil conservation, an operator of a bulldozer digging ponds for a water supply— all of these, if God's dear children, are ministers of God for good. And if they let the light of**

the indwelling Spirit shine through them, and let the leaven of life touch the lives of those about them, they will serve God in the most effective manner in reaching men today. The poorest place on earth to reach those who need to be reached is from a pulpit, because those who need to be reached are not going to come and sit supinely before a wooden stand. If one really wants to witness for Christ in our day, perhaps the worst thing he could do would be to quit teaching a biology class in college and "take up preaching."[48]

He continues:

We are being forced to do what Jesus did— leave our nice comfortable heavens and go into the world where people are living, dying, fighting, fornicating, loving and lusting. And we might just barely be allowed, some of us, "of helping to complete, in our poor human flesh, the full tale of Christ's afflictions still to be endured, for the sake of his body which is the church" (Col. 1:24). The Spirit is driving us into the wilderness and we will be tempted a thousand ways. A lot of us will not be coming back!

I really think that one may minister more effectively for Jesus at the time by showing starving natives how to raise more food than by passing out tracts to skeptical hands, entitled, "Why I am not a Buddhist!" A man whose belly is writhing and cramping from hunger and whose clothing is soiled from diarrhea, is not too much concerned with what a sleek, well-dressed American is not! If brethren can increase the milk supply in a village where puling infants sob and moan as they tug at dry and withered paps, I say, "God bless them!" And I think He will. This does not mean that I want to substitute cow's milk for the sincere milk of the word, any more than Jesus wanted to substitute the loaves and fishes for the bread of life. I do not derogate the value of the soul in ministering to the body. Those who reach such a conclusion will only prove how the sectarian mind can corrupt and defile anything that it touches with its venomous thought.

. . . I do not want to be critical of the motives of any of my brothers, but the writings of some of them about such humanitarian projects smack more of what I call "corn dangling" than the social gospel. When we had a recalcitrant mule who would not go where we wanted him, we learned that by dangling an ear of corn about two feet in front of his face we could take him right on into our stable. If sharing with the hungry and destitute becomes partisan bait and is used as a foundation for planting a "Texas style Church of Christ" and transplanting American culture to Tibet or Taiphong, the hungry will benefit, but the brethren over here may not. When there are any strings attached to sharing except the cords which bind our own hearts to Jesus, we are part of a sectarian Establishment which prostitutes even deeds of mercy to its own growth and gain, and trades on human suffering for its own advancement. Competition makes compassion a farce; rivalry reduces religion to a racket!

We must never forget that while man does not live by bread alone, without bread he does not live at all upon this earth. Jesus was "worshiping" the Father as much when he blessed the loaves and fishes as when "he took bread and blessed it, and broke it and gave it unto them saying, This bread is my body which is broken for you." Come to think of it, did Jesus ever cease to worship God? Should we? Is not our problem that we are still choosing mountains and designating cities as "the place where men ought to worship." Will we ever be able to cast off the shackles of Judaism and "worship in spirit and in truth"? . . .[49]

Our Personal Pattern

In his 1970 essay, "Our Personal Pattern," Ketcherside states that his objective is to conduct "an unbiased investigation of the underlying cause for division among the heirs of the restoration movement." He begins with an examination of

Hebrews 8:5: "See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain." He explains:

> **It is generally assumed that these words spoken to Moses with reference to the tabernacle in the wilderness are applicable to us and that the new covenant scriptures sustain the same relationship to us as did the law of Moses to the children of Israel. We believe that such an exegesis is not only faulty but is the exact opposite of the meaning which the writer of Hebrews intended to convey. . . .**[50]

He then presents his case, summarized below:

> **1.** *A pattern or blueprint is needed only by a builder or construction agent.* **Moses was commissioned to build the tabernacle and no such a structure had ever before been seen. It was necessary for him to have a pattern to follow. God gave no man a pattern for building the true tabernacle. It would have been useless to do so for it is distinctly stated that Jesus is "a minister of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man." We are "the building of God" (1 Cor. 3:9). We are "built, as living stones, into a spiritual temple" (1 Peter 1:5). Instead of a pattern for constructing an edifice what we need is the cement to hold us together as stones in the building.**[51]

> **2.** *A pattern must exist prior to the rearing or erection of a structure and those who do the building must be familiar with it.* **In the Jewish dispensation God established a system of legalism as "a temporary measure pending the arrival of the 'issue' to whom the promise was made" (Gal. 3:19). In any such system the law must be complete and announced in advance or the subjects may be guilty of violating something of which they do not know. . . . In the new covenant arrangement, we are not under law but under grace. It was more than twenty years after the community of saints was planted before the first letter from an apostle was written. By that time the gospel had been taken to the Gentile world and it was to such a congregation the first letter was addressed.**[52]

3. *The passage which occurs in Hebrews 8:5 is found in a context in which the writer is contrasting the priesthood of Jesus with that of the priesthood prescribed by law*. . . . **The pattern is mentioned, not to prove that we have one by which to make everything, but to show that any system based upon such a pattern is inferior. The very next sentence declares, "But in fact the ministry which has fallen to Jesus is as far superior to theirs as are the covenant he mediates and the promises upon which it is secured. . . . The whole point of the Hebrew letter is that Moses needed a pattern for the first tabernacle because he was a mere servant in God's house. No pattern was needed for the real tabernacle since it was constructed by God himself. . . . Since these letters were written to meet conditions as they arose among congregations existing in a pagan society, it is too much to expect they will cover in detail every condition which may affect the church of God in all ages, locations and cultures. I hold the view that the letters were not written as a pattern at all but to call men back toward an ideal involved in their acceptance of Jesus. As men deviated from the path leading toward this ideal it was necessary to recall them. It is obvious, then, that these letters create an understanding of a norm for those who attempt to be "laborers together with God."**[53]

5. *While the apostolic letters constituted a response to needs and conditions then existing, they set forth principles which should govern the people of God in all ages until the absent King returns*. **These letters represented the will of that sovereign expressed by his special envoys. . . . It was not the purpose of these letters to give minute specifications but to create the kind of character or nature which would automatically and spontaneously respond in every contingency in a proper manner. . . . The new covenant scriptures are not new legislation but letters written in love to a new creation. Those who have been made "partakers of the divine nature" respond in a divine manner to every situation. Those who seek to gain the response by law "have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof."**[54]

6. *The apostolic letters were never intended to be exhaustive in specifying details even in dealing with the situations which called them forth*. . . . **All who love the Lord can agree that while these letters were not exhaustive as to methods, manners and modes, the things that are written are for instruction and admonition. . . . It would be foolish to reject the new covenant scriptures as containing no norm. It would be just as foolish to search them to find a scriptural precedent to meet every trivial problem in a modern congregation.**[55]

7. *The content of the apostolic letters demonstrates that it was never the intention of the writers to compile a code of laws*. **One who writes statutes and judgments does not insert little matters of personal interest and concern at intervals throughout the document. . . . There is no question but what the Mosaic dispensation was governed by a legalistic arrangement which is designated as "a written code" in contradistinction to the new covenant which is called "a spiritual bond" (2 Cor. 3:6).**[56]

Ketcherside then presents arguments in support of his view that *our true pattern* **is Jesus:**

Our pattern is not a law, not even a divine one. It is a person. . . . Jesus is our everything! God has made him "our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption." If we have any right to boast it cannot be because of our own program, performance or perfection. . . . So long as we regard the scriptures as a legalistic code we will be as proud as any other lawyer of our knowledge of the law. . . . Our pride must not be that we are in Christ, but it must be in him. It is his status rather than our state which counts. We did not find him, he found us.

Jesus is our pattern and love our guiding principle. It is a summation of all law as well as the *con***summation of all law. "He who loves his neighbor has satisfied every claim of the law. For the commandments, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal,**

thou shalt not covet,' and any other commandment there may be, are all summed up in the one rule, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' Love cannot wrong a neighbor, therefore the whole law is summed up in love" (Rom. 13:8-10). "Every claim— any other commandment— all summed up— one rule."

In view of the fact that we have only one pattern (a person), and only one law (love), we fulfill the demands of God by pledging allegiance to our Lord Jesus Christ and loving one another. . . . This is one of the most difficult things for men to grasp. So long have they regarded the religion of Christ as one of rules, regulations and rituals, they simply cannot accept the fact that the scriptures teach there is just one rule. Paul wrote that, "The whole law can be summed up in a single commandment: Love your neighbor as yourself" (Gal. 5:14).[57]

In expounding upon *the purpose of the scriptures*, **Ketcherside writes:**

The purpose of the apostolic letters was not to formulate a pattern for our pattern is a person. Peter wrote to the Christian slaves, "For to this end you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps" (1 Peter 2:21). The context shows that the purpose of Christ was not to bring a new religion or a systematic theology to mankind, but to develop a character in harmony with the divine nature— a character which would spontaneously react to every external situation and do so in harmony with God's design. Since the pattern is a person and the law is love, when the saints exemplified the proper character, they were commended and when they did not, they were reprimanded, rebuked and encouraged to alter their conduct in conformity to his life. The purpose of the letters was to call men back to the pattern of the divine nature as exemplified in Christ Jesus.

. . .

If we look upon the new covenant scriptures as a code of laws we must have an official interpreter, for no law can be adapted to cases which come before it unless someone rules upon the applicability of the law and the degree of culpability involved in the alleged infraction. This is what has happened. Each party has made its interpretation official and regards it as infallible. The party interpretation has become the will of God. Partisan traditions are accepted as precedents by which to judge contemporary problems. Thus, division is multiplied, and strife increased.

It will be asked if the "law of love" has no interpreter. Indeed, it does, and the interpreter is our pattern. He interpreted by action. "It is by this that we know what love is: that Christ laid down his life for us. And we in turn are bound to lay down our lives for our brothers" (1 John 3:16). "The love I speak of is not our love for God, but the love he showed to us in sending his Son as the remedy for the defilement of our sins. If God thus loved us, dear friends, we in turn are bound to love one another" (1 John 4:10, 11).[58]

Ketcherside continues by summarizing his thesis in seven points:

1. ***Our pattern is the Lord Jesus Christ*****. He came to reveal how sons of God should behave. Ours is a personal relationship with the Father, so the Son of God became the Son of man to demonstrate how the sons of men may become sons of God. We have been "chosen and destined by God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood." Since he has "called us to his own glory and excellence," he has seen fit to grant "to us his precious and very great promises, that through these you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the divine nature."**[59]

2. ***The purpose of the transformation from our lower***

nature to the divine nature is to make it possible for us to react spontaneously to whatever temptations or problems we meet in life. **When the primitive Christians did this they were commended, when they did not, they were reprimanded. The design of both commendation and condemnation was to assure their conformity to His life and character.**[60]

3. *The apostolic writings provide a normative basis for the Christian life in that they constitute a revelation from God as to how His children must conduct themselves to please Him*. **We cannot deprecate the value of the new covenant scriptures because they constitute our means of knowing what is involved in the divine nature. Every person who gives his allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ must seek to understand and implement in his own life the things taught by the Spirit.**[61]

4. *While every facet of our relationship is provided for in the new covenant scriptures, not every detail or method of implementation is spelled out*. **The church of God is ageless and timeless. Its members must apply the principles set forth to the best of their ability and according to their discretion. This was true of the communities of the saints to whom the letters were originally addressed. It is equally true of those who read them nineteen centuries later.**[62]

5. *As knowledge and discernment increases, alterations and amendments will be made, both personally and corporately, in order to conform more fully to the demands of the divine nature*.[63]

6. *Since the new covenant system is not one of legalism we should avoid making the new covenant scriptures a written code of justification*. **. . . We should not judge the eternal worthiness of one upon his ability to see every detail as we do, lest we set up as laws or tests of fellowship, our own reasoning or interpretation. For example, it would be sinful for me to speak disparagingly of one of God's children who does not share my views relative to the use of multiple cups in distribution of the Lord's Supper. The**

feast is the Lord's, and I must love all of his brethren who sit down at his table. They are my brethren too. If Paul could recognize as brethren those in Corinth "who came together not for the better but for the worse" surely I can revere as brethren those who do not share all of my views about externals which have no power to save or to damn. It is enough for me that "he has put his seal upon us and given his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee."[64]

7. *I shall not be so concerned about how much my brethren know about the written word at a given time as I am about how much they love God and the brethren at all times*. **Surely I want to increase in knowledge, and I want others to do so, but if one could "understand all mysteries and all knowledge" he would still be nothing without love. The more I learn of God the more I will know about love because "God is love." The blueprint is not written in a book. It is inscribed on the heart by the Spirit. If I interpret the Book to inspire hate or to create and justify division, I have missed the whole point. I must believe everything God said and I must believe in Him whom God sent.**[65]

Ketcherside concludes the essay with these reflections:

Let me once more assert my conviction. I love the revealed word of God as contained in the new covenant scriptures. It is a light to my path and a lamp to my feet. But to pervert it from its divine purpose is to take the staff intended to support one who walks with his brethren and turn it into a club to kill the brethren with whom it is intended he should walk. Signposts are to be followed and not jerked up as weapons to kill other pilgrims. God has not given us a blueprint for an institution, but a green light to proceed in the Living Way, and I am ready to go.[66]

Concluding Thoughts

Carl Ketcherside was born just over a century after

Thomas Campbell began working on his *Declaration and Address*. It was his lot to be raised in one of the most conservative segments of Churches of Christ of his day. At age 44, while working in Belfast, Ireland, he came to the realization that rather than following in the steps of Thomas Campbell, he had been a promoter of division among the followers of Jesus. From that moment, he embarked on an examination of the movement in which he was raised, in search of an answer to how the unity movement into which he was born— and which he had promoted for decades— had become one of the most divided religious groups in America.

Since Ketcherside's story reflects much of my own (although my search for answers began in La Paz, Bolivia, in 1970), I have been a student of his thinking for the past fifty-three years. But it was his reasoning, as outlined in the present chapter, that enabled me to recognize that he had discovered in scripture a logical way of escape from the labyrinth of legalism into which I was born.

Of the many things Ketcherside wrote which were of help to me, none was more significant than what I have summarized below, in my own words. I believe it represents the core of his thinking relative to the topic of this chapter.

As human beings seeking to follow the teachings of the Bible, we seem naturally to crave an external method of verifying whether we are pleasing to God. For that purpose, the "pattern" concept has provided great comfort to many, as it allows us to confidently review the list of God's requirements and check off each item as it is completed. Doing so is presumed to bring peace with God and the assurance of being acceptable to him.

The problem, however, is that we know ourselves too well. At a deeper level of consciousness, we recognize that such "peace" is superficial. We are aware that, more often than not,

the motive of heart out of which we act is not one that pleases God, nor one that qualifies our behavior as "good."

A close examination of the new covenant scriptures reveals that the ultimate object of God's judgment is the motive of the heart. We also discover in scripture that all words, thoughts, and actions arise from motives. Furthermore, we recognize, from 1 Corinthians 13, that the only motive of heart acceptable to God is that of his divine love— not human love. Yet such love cannot be attained by mere human effort, though it was seen in its fulness in the life of Jesus.

Divine love must be received as a gift from God, conveyed to the recipient as the gift of himself in the person of his divine nature or Spirit. Through the medium of the Spirit, the divine love of God— a metaphor for God, who is love— is poured out into our hearts by his divine nature or Spirit who lives within us. It is through his own love that God works and wills through his people, as he brings many children to share in the glory of his divine nature.

In the following chapter, Ketcherside's thinking with regard to the fellowship of the Spirit will be examined. It was his view that the divine love of God, his divine nature, the nature of his Spirit, shared by every true child of God, is not only the fulfillment of the "law of Christ" but the foundation of all spiritual fellowship.

For Additional Study

The following is a list of articles by W. Carl Ketcherside that discuss the topic of the current chapter in greater detail. All of Ketcherside's essays are available in volumes 1 and 3 of the *e-book* series *The Works of W. Carl Ketcherside*, accessible on Amazon.com and archive.org.

Ketcherside on the Authority of Silence

- **"Argument from Silence."** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1972): 129.**
- **"The Recovery of Reason."** *Mission Messenger* **(February 1972): 23.**
- **"'Silence of the Scriptures:' A Shopworn Myth."** *Restoration Review* **5 (May 1985): 95.**
- **"The Myth of the Authority of Silence."** *Restoration Review* **9 (November 1985): 175.**

Ketcherside on Patternism

- **"According to the Pattern."** *Mission Messenger* **(February 1970): 177.**
- **"A Pattern of Freedom."** *Mission Messenger* **(April 1970): 177.**
- **"Sources of Our Patterns."** *Mission Messenger* **(June 1970): 177.**
- **"The Happiness Pattern."** *Mission Messenger* **(November 1970): 177.**

Our Supper Pattern:

- **"The Supper Pattern."** *Mission Messenger* **(May 1970): 65.**

Our Money Pattern:

- **"Worship and Money."** *Mission Messenger* **(November 1966): 177.**
- **"Introduction to Worship."** *Mission Messenger* **(August 1966): 129.**

Our Name Pattern:

- **"A Sectarian Name."** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1970): 129.**
- **"The Name Pattern."** *Mission Messenger* **(August 1970): 113.**

Our Worship Pattern:

- **"Holy Places and Days."** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1966): 145.**
- **"Acts of Worship."** *Mission Messenger* **(October 1966): 161.**
- **"Authority of the Word."** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1969): 129.**

Our Personal Pattern:

- **"Our Personal Pattern."** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1970): 33.**

Chapter 9

DIVINE LOVE:
THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE SPIRIT

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- Introduction
- Historical Development
- Ketcherside on the Fellowship of the Spirit
- Ketcherside on Agape as the Basis of Christian Fellowship
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Introduction

> **My position was best enunciated by a former president of Harding College. "*I am resolved to make nothing a test of fellowship which God has not made a condition of salvation*." —W. Carl Ketcherside[1]**

The biblical foundation of Christian fellowship, as understood by Carl Ketcherside, is best described by John in his first epistle: "And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ" (1:3). That fellowship, according to Paul, is "of the Spirit" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

In the original language of the New Testament, the word translated *fellowship* signifies something held in common by two or more people— that is, something shared. What Christians share or have in common— and that which makes them children of God— is the Spirit, the life, or nature of God. As a result of coming to share in the life of God, through rebirth of water and the Spirit, one becomes God's child and brother to all children of the same Father. This is alluded to by Paul in his letter to the Romans:

> **You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you.** *And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ he does not belong to Christ.* **But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you (8:9-11;** *italics added*).

It is the life of God in all genuine believers— conveyed to them by the Spirit— that causes them to share, as it were, the same spiritual DNA as the Father. To share the Spirit of God is to share his life or his divine nature— his divine love. It is this love, in a human context, that Paul describes in detail in 1

Corinthians 13, and which was demonstrated in the life of Jesus.

The presence of divine love in the children of God is that which enables the world to recognize them as disciples of Jesus (John 13:35), for the resemblance between Jesus and his brothers is unmistakable. To that end, Jesus instructed his disciples to love all whom he loves, in the way and to the extent that he loves them. He uniquely referred to that instruction as "*my command***."**

> **A new command I give you: Love one another.** *As I have loved you***, so you must love one another. . . . My command is this: Love each other** *as I have loved you***. . . . This is my command: Love each other (John 13:34; 15:12, 17;** *italics added***.)**

Disciples of Jesus are not to love as the world loves, but in the way in which Jesus loved. In defining divine love, John doesn't provide a lexical definition but instead points to a real-life demonstration of it in the life of Jesus. He then prescribes the consequent duty of the true disciple:

> **This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers (1 John 3:16).**

The Greek phrase translated "*love of God***" may carry one of two meanings: (1)** *our* **love for God or (2)** *God's* **love for us. Its meaning must be determined by the context.**

When Paul writes, "Now hope does not disappoint, because *the love of God* **has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Romans 5:5, NKJV,** *italics added***), Ketcherside concludes that "the love of God" in verse 5 is the same as that found in verse 8, where Paul refers explicitly to God's "own love for us." This interpretation is further supported by Paul's contrast between divine love and human love. While divine love will give up its life for its enemies— for**

powerless, ungodly sinners— human love *might* venture to die for someone in whom it perceives value (Romans 5:7), but *never* for its enemies.

Since the divine love of God is the love of God's nature, it is understandable that Paul refers to this love as "the love of the Spirit" (Romans 15:30). In his prayer to the Father, Jesus refers to this love as "the love you have for me" (John 17:26)— that is, God's own love. It was this *divine love* that was to form *the basis of unity* between the Father, the Son, and all his other children. Jesus prayed:

> **I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one *as we are one*: I in them and you in me. . . . I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that *the love you have for me may be in them* and that I myself may be in them (John 17:23, 26).**

Jesus here reveals that the unity of God's children is of the same nature as that which exists between the Father and the Son. They are one because they share the same divine love— that is, the same divine Spirit: "I in them and you in me."

Christians, then, are one because God is one. He is *in* them in the same way that he is *in* the Son and the Son is *in* him (John 14:11). They are one because they share the same Spirit, and they are one with *all* others who share the Spirit of God. This is the "unity of the Spirit" of which Paul wrote to the Ephesians (4:3), noting, in the previous chapter, that it is through the Spirit that Christ lives in the hearts of his disciples.

Through the Spirit, disciples of Jesus come to *experience* the nature of God— *his divine love*— in a way that cannot otherwise be known. It is by knowing or experiencing the divine love of Christ that they come to be filled with all the fulness of God himself:

> **I pray that . . . he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,** *and to know this love* **that** *surpasses knowledge***— that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:16-19;** *italics added***.)**

This is another way of saying that by having the love of God's nature in their inner being, they have come to participate in— or share in— the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4), which is divine love. As John wrote:

> **Dear friends, let us love one another, for** *love comes from God***. Everyone who loves has been born of God and** *knows* **God. Whoever does not love does not** *know* **God, because God is love. And so we** *know* **and rely on** *the love God has for us***. God is love. Whoever** *lives in love* **lives in God, and** *God in him* **(1 John 4:7, 8,16;** *italics added***).**

It is significant that John here specifies that the love of which he speaks *originates* **with God— it "comes from God." It is his nature. The love he refers to is** *divine* **love, and should not be confused with human love, any more than the holy Spirit should be confused with the human spirit. Consequently, God** *is* **love, but human love** *is not* **God.**

Consistent with the foregoing, Paul's assurance to the Philippians that he longed for them all "with the affection of Christ Jesus" (1:8) is not a reference to Paul's affection *for* **Christ, but to the affection which Christ had for the Philippians — an affection shared with Paul by the Spirit, through whom the love of God had been poured out into his heart.**

It is by the Spirit that God's spiritual offspring are progressively transformed— from one level of glory to another — until they share the glory or *image of Christ* **(2 Corinthians**

3:18, *italics added*), **who is "the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being" (Hebrews 1:3). It was for this purpose that they had been predestined— "to be conformed to the likeness of his Son" (Romans 8:29). Consequently, the essence of the mystery, which had been hidden for ages, was simply: "Christ** *in* **you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27). Therefore "we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God" (Romans 5:2).**

In the above passage, Paul describes the ultimate goal of the new creation in terms similar to those of the writer of Hebrews, who states that it was in the process of "*bringing many sons to glory***" that he deemed it appropriate to perfect the author of their salvation by means of suffering (2:10). From these statements, it is clearly implied that** *God's ultimate purpose in creation* **was to share his glory or his nature with the children of his new creation.**

In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul defines the goal of spiritual growth— or Christian maturity— when he describes the function of Christian leaders:

> **. . .** *to prepare God's people for works of service***, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we reach unity in the faith an in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:12, 13;** *italics added***).**

The ultimate objective of preparing God's people for *works of service* **becomes clear three verses later, where he explains that as God's love rules in our hearts, we grow spiritually— each of us exercising, by the power of divine love, the abilities with which we have been endowed.**

> **Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament,** *grows* **and builds itself up** *in love***,** *as*

each part does its work.— **Ephesians 4:15, 16.**[2]

Growth of the spiritual body of Christ, Paul explains, occurs *as each member*— **motivated by the divine love of God, which comes from the head, Christ—** *does its work*. **In so doing, members of the body demonstrate their kinship to Christ, who "did not come to be served, but to serve" (Matthew 20:28).**

Paul also who revealed that we who believe were crafted by God *for the purpose of doing good works*— **works prompted by the divine love that existed long before we did:**

> **For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do (Ephesians 2:10).**

To this Titus adds,

> **"Christ . . . gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works" (Titus 2:13, 14, CSB).**

To that end, the *specified* **purpose of the church assembling is not to worship, as is commonly thought— but nowhere stated in the new covenant scriptures— but to "***stir up one another to love and good works***" (Hebrews 10:24). It is through the exercise of divine love, expressed in the works it motivates, that the body grows.**

This is further explained by Paul to the Colossians, writing that it is Christ, the Head, "from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow" (Colossians 2:19). While it is through divine love that the body grows, that "love comes from God" (1 John 4:7). In this sense, Paul explains, the body's growth occurs *as God causes it to grow*.

It is through growth in works of love that the body grows

and *reaches maturity*, **attaining to the whole measure of the** *fullness of Christ* **(Ephesians 3:19; 4:13). In the previous chapter, being "filled to the measure of all the** *fullness of God* **(3:18) is achieved when believers are strengthened in their inner being with the "power" of God's Spirit, resulting in Christ living in their hearts.** *The power of the Spirit is the power of divine love***.**

For Christ to be in the believer, the divine love of God— "the love you have for me"— must be poured out into the hearts of his disciples. Christ living in his disciples enables them to comprehend the dimensions of his love— just how far divine love will go in its service of others— and to *know* **or experience that love, which ultimately results in their being filled with the fullness of God.**

> **And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long, and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge— that you may be** *filled to the measure of all the fullness of God* **(Ephesians 3:17-19;** *italics added***).**

The state of being filled with the fullness of God, referred to above, is also described in following chapter as becoming "mature, *attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ***" (Ephesians 4:13,** *italics added***).**

To *know* **God is to have him living in one's inner being. To have God living within is to have his divine nature poured out into the heart, through which one is progressively transformed — from glory to glory— into the very image of Christ. Paul explained to the Galatians that before coming to faith, they** *did not know* **God, but now they** *know* **him. He further explains that coming to know God is more a matter of their being "known" by God.**

While experiencing the the divine love of God in our inner being is referred to as "knowing God," our knowledge or

experience of his love is still "in part." Whereas his knowledge of us is complete. Thus, while we have come to know God as a result of his having come to live in our inner being, it is more precise to say that we have been *known* by God.

> **Formerly, when you did not *know* God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods. But *now that you know God* – or rather are known by God . . . (4:8, 9).**

But when maturity comes, we shall know even as we are fully known (1 Corinthians 13:12).

John writes:

> **Whoever does *not love* does *not know* God, because God is love (1 John 4:8).**
>
> **We know that we have passed from death to life, *because we love* our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death. Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him (1 John 3:14, 15).**
>
> **I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life (1 John 5:13).**

To love as Christ loves, we must have the same Spirit, the same love, and the same nature as he. Only in this way may we be one as the Father and the Son are one— God in the Son, and the Son in us. *Christ is the Spirit* **(2 Corinthians 3:17). He is the true God and eternal life (1 John 5:20). To grow up in divine love is to grow to spiritual maturity in Christ.** *The spiritual growth of the body is growth in divine love***. Just as the human spirit or human nature is not the holy Spirit or the divine nature, human love is not divine love. Human love is fundamentally self-serving; divine love does nothing to please itself.**

Paul reminds the Corinthians that Christ had died for all, "*that those who live should no longer live for themselves***" (2 Corinthians 5:15).**

He also admonished the Romans, "*Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. For even Christ did not please himself***" (Romans 15:2–3).**

He explained to the Galatians that in order to fulfill the law of Christ they should "*Carry each other's burdens***" (Galatians 6:2)**

He also wrote to the Corinthians: "*Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others* **(1 Corinthians 10:24).**

He admonished the Philippians: "*Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves***" (Philippians 2:3).**

In his letter to the Galatians Paul lists "selfishness" among "the works of the flesh" (5:20).

He commanded the Roman believers to "*Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves***" (Romans 12:10).**

In describing divine love, Paul writes, "*love is not self-seeking***" (1 Corinthians 13:5).**

And, after explaining that God is love and lives in those who love, John observes that "*in this world we are like him***" (1 John 4:17).**

The fundamental principle of action for those outside of Christ is self-service. According to John, to be driven by this principle is to walk in darkness.

Those who are in Christ have the *light of life* **within them.**

Consequently, they are called *children of light*. With the light of God's divine love within, they can discern selfish motives— the source of sin— and thereby distinguish right from wrong.

To have the light of the life of the Spirit within oneself is to share in the divine love of God. This sharing of divine love is what Paul refers to as *the fellowship of the Spirit* (2 Corinthians 13:14).

While I have summarized Carl Ketcherside's thoughts on the divine love of the Spirit as the basis of spiritual fellowship, his own words will be presented shortly. However, since my thesis asserts that Ketcherside's thinking largely reflects that of the Restoration fathers, a review of their thinking will serve to support this claim.

Historical Development

From an early date, the fathers of the Restoration Movement recognized that a restoration of the *vocabulary of the Spirit* would be required if the ancient order of things was to be restored. Alexander Campbell frequently referred to the corrupt vocabulary of Christians in his day, referring to it as the *language of Ashdod*. Two such words are central to the thesis set forth in this chapter— *love* and *fellowship*.

In his "Essays on the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian Ages, No. 16," written in 1830— summarized below— Campbell acknowledges that the law of Moses is fulfilled by love and that love is the great principle of the new era of the Spirit. However, he calls attention to a crucial distinction: the law did not provide the strength or motive to do what it required. In contrast, divine love, received through the presence of the Holy Spirit in the heart, imparts a *power*— a strength, an energy— *that the law could not provide*.

Under the new Institution, Campbell continues, the one

great principle of action is called *the new commandment.* **As Paul wrote to Timothy, the end or object of the commandment is** *love* **out of a pure heart, out of a good conscience, and from faith unfeigned (1 Timothy 1:5). The Christian Institution** *creates* **this love in man— a love of a higher order. Service under the dominion of this type of love sets men free.**

In the service of love, there is no serving "from memory," as was the case with the Jews under the covenant of law. It is characteristic of children that they serve out of memory (of rules). In youth, memory is strong, but judgment is weak, whereas in manhood, judgment is strong and memory fades. Love, *the principle of action* **in the mature Christian, governs everything. Consequently, the obedience of faith is also the obedience of love— where no precept nor command, with a penalty, is required.**

While the two great commandments of the law required wholehearted love to God, "*it did not afford the strength nor the motive to call them forth***." It was a condemnatory precept. But under the new Institution, "the love of God, shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit, excites to an activity, and imparts an energy which the law could not do."[3]**

In an essay titled "Christianity," Thomas Campbell observes that *divine love* **is the natural law of the universe:**

> **Hence it is evident, that the yoke of Christ is a yoke of love; than which nothing can be more pleasant, profitable, or honorable. For who could be more happy in himself, or conduce more to the happiness of others, or be more highly and justly esteemed, than the possessor of this universal love? For this divine love is the natural law of the universe, and had never been interrupted, had not sin taken place. Therefore, he that dwells under the influence of this love, must be one of the happiest persons in the universe; for he that dwells in love, dwells in God, and God in him; "for God is love."[4]**

In a similar vein, in 1837, Alexander Campbell affirms that God dwells in the hearts of his people by the Holy Spirit, strengthening them by sharing with them his own divine nature:

> **The glory of the Christian religion is, that God dwells in the hearts of his people by his Holy Spirit; and that, indeed, he is their strength in weakness, their health in sickness, their joy in sorrow, and their life in death. "I will dwell in them, and walk in them"— "I will write my laws upon their heart"— "I will be their God, and they shall be my people"— "I will never leave them nor forsake them," are, I thank the Lord, exceeding great and precious promises of the Christian institution, by which we are made partakers of a divine nature, and, without which, we should be often in despair of eternal life.[5]**

In the first of a series of three essays in the *Harbinger* on "Christian Unity," Robert Richardson explains how spiritual unity is effected, according to Jesus's prayer of John 17. That unity, says Richardson, is the result of the in-dwelling of Christ through the Spirit in every true disciple. It is not mere union, but unity, and the mode by which it is effected is distinctly stated to be the in-dwelling of Christ. It is the presence of his Spirit by which our hearts are assured before God. It is through the in-dwelling of the Spirit of God that this unity is attained, a unity that is to be *preserved*, not achieved.[6]

Ketcherside on the Fellowship of the Spirit

In mid-1974, Ketcherside's book, *Heaven Help Us*, was released by the Standard Publishing Company. It was one of only three books published during his lifetime that were not self-published by Mission Messenger. He later states that it was written "for the purpose of establishing by the scriptures the identity and uniqueness of the Spirit as a personality."

In Chapter 5, discussing the third of three benedictions to

the saints at Corinth— *the communion of the Holy Spirit***— Ketcherside explains:**

> **Remember that it is connected with the majestic terms, grace and love. This very association is indicative of the manner in which God regards it. Grace, love, and fellowship— these constitute a triad of blessings associated with the greatest names in the universe. It is a matter of great importance that the apostle closes his epistle to the distressed and distressful congregation at Corinth with such a benediction.**
>
> **The word here for "communion" is** *koinonia***, generally translated "fellowship." Most lexicographers agree, however, that it is a word of such depth that no single English term can exhaust its meaning. This becomes evident when we realize the variety of terms for it occurring in the** *King James Version***. The root word means "***common***," indicating something shared or held in common. From it we derive such words as "community."**
>
> **What is the fellowship of the spirit? Certainly it is not something men attain or achieve by their own merit or efforts. Just as grace is bestowed by Christ and love is bestowed by God, so fellowship is a gift of the Spirit. We share in grace, love, and life as blessings from Heaven. The very best definition of fellowship is "the sharing of a common life," and the** *New English Bible* **so translates** *koinonia***.**
>
> **The fellowship, or communion, of which the apostle writes is not the mere participation with others in common pursuits. Men may pool their resources and combine their efforts without recourse to the Spirit at all. History is filled with misguided attempts of atheistic social reformers to create colonies where the name of God was proscribed and reading of the Bible was prohibited. The common life in which we are to share is the life of the Spirit.**
>
> **To substitute the term "share the life of the Spirit" for the term "communion (fellowship) of the Spirit" still**

does not answer the question as to what is meant by, or involved in, the life of the Spirit. In the New Covenant Scriptures the word *koinoniais* is found twenty times. It is rendered "fellowship" twelve times in the *King James Version*, which also translates it "communion" four times. Of the twelve times it is translated "fellowship," one-third of these occur in 1 John 1. In this chapter we gain a glimpse of the common life in which we participate through the Spirit. John begins the chapter by an affirmation regarding the living Word, that is, the Word of life. He asserts that this Word was manifested, or embodied, and that the apostles had visual, audible, and manual proof of His existence upon the earth. They had heard Him, seen Him, and touched Him.

The life of the Word was eternal life, and when the apostles gazed upon the Son of God they saw eternal life incarnated. "We have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us" (1 John 1:2; KJV). Three actions are referred to in this statement. The first was personal experience, and experience of the best kind. "We have seen." This provides eyewitness testimony. The second is public proclamation of the testimony, bearing witness to the world. The third is declaration to the saints for their edification and comfort. That which was manifested to the apostles was life, and that which they proclaimed to the saints was life. But it was not simply existence, it was life that had been with the Father, the God-life now shared with men in a bodily manifestation. This is important because it demonstrates that Christ came in order to show that eternal life can dwell in man even now.

The next statement of the apostle is significant, and yet few catch the significance of it. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship (*koinonia*) with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (v. 3). The use of the word "fellowship" obscures the real meaning to modern minds, although the first-century disciples would

have understood it.

Paul is clearly saying that the eternal life with the Father has now been embodied in a Son. Those who were called as His envoys have been made shareholders in this eternal life. The purpose of their testimony was that those who heard might share in the same common life with them, since the life in which they participated was with the Father and the Son. The Spirit not only operates upon our hearts through the good news to bring us into the life-sharing relationship, but dwells in our hearts in order to maintain that life within us. Just as there is no physical life without the spirit of man, so there is no spiritual life without the Spirit of God. "The Spirit is life because of righteousness" (Romans 8:10; KJV). The activating principle of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes us free from the law of sin and death.

Much is involved in the phrase, "the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." This frees us from condemnation, and liberates us from fear, including even the fear of death. The life is in the Son. On this matter there can be no quibbling. "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4). "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). It follows, then, that one who has the Son has life, and this is exactly what we are taught (1 John 5:11, 12).

To share in the life of the Spirit is to participate in eternal life, a transcendent personal relationship with God and Christ. The one God, the one Lord, and the one Spirit join in bestowing upon us grace, love, and eternal life. No greater gifts could possibly be offered to men in the flesh. No greater responsibility could be ours than to cherish and use these gifts to the glory of the Father. No more beautiful expression or benediction could be employed in closing a letter than that in which Paul closes his epistle to the Corinthians.

In this chapter it was pointed out that the Holy Spirit is in constant association with the Father and the

Son. While different functions are peculiar to each, there is a divine harmony apparent in their relationships. It is not essential to faith that we understand all of the intricate workings of God, or that we comprehend in its fulness the spiritual realm. We have the testimony of God, and upon the basis of that evidence, we accept the personality and divinity of the Spirit.[7]

Although Ketcherside's autobiography was published posthumously by College Press in 1991, the last book he published himself was *In the Beginning*, **released in 1980— just nine years prior to his death. Regarding the author, the** *Publisher's Preface* **to the Kindle e-book edition states:**

> **The title of the book was aptly chosen, for the essays and speeches it contains are from around the year 1957, the year which marks the beginning of notable change in his mission and message. While the spiritual awakening which led to the radical reorientation of his understanding of the fundamental nature of Christian fellowship occurred in 1951 . . . from 1953 to 1957, Ketcherside was engaged in a thorough review of the history of the unity movement of which he was an heir. As he wrote in his autobiography, "During those years I learned the stern discipline of research and study. I read every word of the five volume Lard's Quarterly, the seven volume Christian Baptist, and as many bound volumes of the Millennial Harbinger as were available to me." It was only after this period of diligent research and a thorough review of the Scriptures upon which his earlier thinking rested, that Ketcherside was ready to share with the readers of his journal the new outlook which, in his words, had crystallized in his heart.**[8]

In chapter 13, Ketcherside begins a series of nine essays titled *Thoughts on Fellowship*. **Below are excerpts in which he explores the concept of fellowship:**

> **The church of God at Corinth consisted of called saints, those who were sanctified in Christ Jesus (1:2). The**

state or condition to which they were called by God is expressed by the term "*the fellowship* of his Son Jesus Christ." To this state they attained through "the grace of God which is given by Jesus Christ" (1:4). Because they were called into such a state they were to avoid all schisms among themselves (1:10). Being bound by a common tie, they were to avoid those things which would disrupt the community, or place strains upon their union. They were to "endeavor to guard the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3). By this means they would "walk worthy of the calling wherewith you are called."

What is involved in "the fellowship of Jesus Christ our Lord"? How do we attain unto it? Who are participants in it? How do they remain in it? What action will separate them from this state? How do we guard it? Surely these are matters of grave importance, and should challenge the thinking of every person on earth who believes that there is a God, and that Jesus Christ is His Son, and our Savior. The state of fellowship represents a complete change in relationship. The prior condition is described as being "alienated from the life of God." The new state is described as one of sonship, in which the participant is "an heir of God through Christ" (Gal. 4:7). From a state in which there was no sharing in the blessings of God, a transformation takes place in which the one who is called becomes a sharer of the divine bounty as a son.

It is our conviction that the community of saints in Christ Jesus is the earthly culmination of that eternal purpose which is described as "a plan for the ages to gather together in one all things in Christ" (Eph. 1:10). The mystery of fellowship was hidden in God from the beginning of the world (Eph. 3:9). In other ages it was not made known unto the sons of men, but in this final age on earth, it was revealed unto the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. The purpose of this revelation was "to make all men see" (Eph. 3:9). If, then, we are to see the truth upon this wonderful subject we must go to the revelation contained in the Christian scriptures. Our ideas, opinions

and notions relative to fellowship mean nothing unless they coincide with God's revelation. Our task is to ascertain from the new covenant scriptures what significance and meaning is attached to the term by the Holy Spirit.

The concept of fellowship with the Father, and with the Son, belongs to mankind only since that Son came in the flesh. This is abundantly clear to the student of the first epistle of John. Judaism provided an elaborate system of rules and ceremonies by which its adherents were kept apart from God, each other, and the world about them. The keynote was struck at the foot of Sinai, when their constitution was to be announced. Bounds were placed about the mountain so that the people would not come near. The threat of death was held over the Israelites. They were literally fenced off from God. "For they could not endure the order that was given, If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned. Indeed so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, I tremble with fear" (Hebrews 12:20, 21). The ritualism of the law maintained barriers between the people and God. The Almighty communed with them from the thick darkness of the most holy place. He was separated from them by a thick veil.[9]

Further on, Ketcherside explains:

The death of Jesus not only established a nearness of the people of God expressed by His language, "I will receive you, and be a Father unto you" (2 Cor. 6:17, 18), but it also removed barriers which separated men from their fellows. "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us . . . that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby" (Eph. 2:14, 16). It is worthy of note that the work of achieving unity is not credited to man. That is the work of Jesus. He made both one. He broke down the barrier of separation. He abolished in his flesh the enmity. He made

in himself of two one new man. He reconciled both unto God in one body. He came and preached peace.

It is through Him we all have access by one Spirit unto the Father. "*Therefore* . . . ye are fellow-citizens with the saints" (Eph. 2:19). Not because of what we have done, but because of what He has done. The unity is achieved by the Spirit. It is called "the fellowship of the Spirit" (Phil. 2:2). All we can do is to guard and maintain that "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Any person who erects a wall of partition to divide, separate and segregate brethren, regardless of what that wall may be, thereby opposes the work of God's Son and does despite to the Spirit of grace. He runs counter to the divine purpose in the world.[10]

Ketcherside defines the nature of the sharing that fellowship entails:

Fellowship has to do with sharing. It can never be divorced from this idea. Through grace Jesus shared our lot. "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood he also himself likewise took part of the same" (Heb. 2:14). "He emptied himself, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Phil. 2:7). "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor. 8:9). The Christian life is a shared response to God called forth by the gift of God of which we have been made partakers. We are made partakers of Christ through the gospel. Our obedience to the demands of the gospel, introduces us into that state or condition called fellowship with God. We are in fellowship with each other only because we sustain the same relationship to Him. We cannot create that state. We cannot invent the terms by which we enter it. We are called into it by the Father.

1. Fellowship with God is not conditioned upon perfect knowledge of the divine revelation. "If anyone

imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know" (1 Cor. 8:2). One who professes that he knows everything, is guilty of a highly inflamed imagination.

2. It is not contingent upon attainment to a life of sinless perfection. "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8). "For we all make many mistakes" (James 2:2).

3. It is not contingent upon an ability to explain or expound every point of doctrine. If it were we could not grow after becoming members of the body. "Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that we who teach shall be judged with greater strictness."

It is contingent upon a complete surrender of self to the Christ, and a willingness to follow as He leads. On the divine side, fellowship is a union with and a participation in the life of Christ through the Spirit; on the human side it is a communion with brethren whose mutual relations were transformed by the Spirit. If fellowship were limited only to those who had perfect knowledge, led perfect lives, or could explain every point of doctrine perfectly a lot of us would never experience it at all. It is regrettable that those who create such terms only eliminate themselves.[11]

In the second essay of the series, Ketcherside describes the common misconception that Christian fellowship consists of sharing a common understanding of doctrine:

One of the most tragic misconceptions is based on the idea that fellowship is synonymous with, or equivalent to, endorsement of anything or everything the other "fellow" may hold or advocate. In any final analysis this must lead to the conclusion that no two persons could ever be in fellowship until they both reach perfect knowledge and complete agreement upon every minute detail. The folly of such a view can easily be detected by any thinking person. We do not make other kindred terms subject to

such unreasonable interpretation. Can *friendship* exist between those who do not agree upon all issues. Can *partnership* exist between persons who are unequal in knowledge and attainment, and who possess divergent views? Certainly there are many close friends who disagree upon some matters, and many partners who associate in business in spite of divergent opinions.

We are to be in fellowship "with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3). Does this mean that God did not accept us into fellowship until our understanding of all things is equal to his divine knowledge? If so, how can we "*grow in grace and knowledge of the truth*" after we come into Christ? Now, if God being perfect, can be in fellowship with us in our ignorance and imperfection, why do we set up a standard for others which he did not set up for us? If it be argued that John meant only the apostles were in fellowship with the Father and the Son, the difficulty is not lessened.

Were James and John in the fellowship of Jesus when they were making the demand that one of them sit on His right hand and one on the left when He came in His kingdom? Were the others who became angry at this in His fellowship? Was Peter in His fellowship when He tried to thwart His death by saying "Be it not so, for this shall not be unto you." Was he in the fellowship of Christ from Pentecost to the time of his vision on the housetop at Joppa? Certainly he did not realize that God had removed the restrictions upon eating of meats and zealously followed the ceremonial regime of Judaism. Nor did he previously grasp the great truth that "God is no respecter of persons." If he could be in the fellowship until he learned these truths, may not others be in the same fellowship, while learning the way of truth more perfectly?

The fact is that the fellowship of the new covenant is not based upon unanimity of opinion, interpretation, or even understanding of scriptural doctrine. It does not imply nor indicate endorsement of the position of one with

whom we may differ. Fellowship is one thing; endorsement of the position taken by another is a wholly different thing. Fellowship of Christ, and in Christ, is a state or condition into which we are called by God through the gospel; endorsement of an interpretation or idea of one in or out of the fellowship is a rational act of our own minds. It is the jumbled, mixed-up thinking on this point that has created the factionalism, partisan spirit, and sectarianism, so rife among the heirs of the restoration movement.[12]

Ketcherside then relates an experience in which a brother he called on to lead in prayer declined to do so. The brother later explained that he could not "fellowship" Ketcherside because he did not oppose Bible classes. Consequently, he was afraid that if he prayed to God at Ketcherside's request, it would constitute "fellowship" with him. Ketcherside then remarks:

I felt sorry for him, for I grew up in the same kind of bigoted and partisan relationship. I can recall how we used to discuss whether it was right to call a man a "brother" who disagreed with us on colleges, orphan homes, classes, cups, instrumental music, or the millennial theory.

I was afraid to call upon a man to pray to God who was not of "our group," for I realized what "the brotherhood" would do to me if they found it out. I did not want to be put through the meat grinder or sausage mill. It seems incredible to me now that we once drove out from us one who addressed a Christian Church elder as brother and asked him to lead in prayer. I am thrilled that the grace of God delivered me from such littleness. I have recently very carefully scrutinized my heart on all of these controversial issues. I find that I have not materially altered my position on a single one of them. I am stronger than ever in my previous convictions on most of them. But I am no longer afraid of what men will do unto me! I refuse to be the mouthpiece of a faction, or the cat's paw of a clique! I am no longer a party pigeon or a Simple Simon. I want to belong to the Lord and bow unto Him only. To us there is but one Lord!

I have learned that those who differ with me on these issues are my brethren, because of their relationship to the family, or household of God. We are not brothers because we have the same opinions but because we have the same Father. We also have the same mother, for Jerusalem which is from above is the mother of us all. If having the same Father and Mother does not make us brothers, pray tell me what it would take. Every baptized penitent believer on this earth is my brother, and we are in *fellowship* **because we are a part of the brotherhood of Christ. That is the only** *brotherhood* **on this whole wide earth in which I am the least bit interested.**

I do not agree on much with most of those who are in it, and do not fully agree with any of them, but fellowship in God is one thing, and perfect agreement is a wholly different thing. My father had six children, and they often differed with each other and even with their parents, but it never once occurred to me to deny they were my brothers and sisters because we argued loud and long. We were brothers not because of what we had done but because we were introduced by birth into a family state or relationship. The relationship into which we are introduced by the new birth is the fellowship of the new covenant. We have been in fellowship with a lot more people than we ever realized, or even yet realize. I am in fellowship with every saved person on this earth, that is, if I am saved. When I was younger, the family of God was a little one but now that I have grown out of my own provincialism, that family has increased perceptibly. Praise His name!

Every person who has received Christ Jesus, and thus has been born of the water and of the Spirit, who has experienced the riches of the glory of God's mystery "which is Christ in you, the hope of glory," is in the fellowship. They are *partakers* **of the inheritance of the saints in light, having been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the Kingdom of the Messiah. Having been called into the kingdom and glory of God,**

and having been sealed by the Holy Spirit they are in *communion* with God and with every other person on earth who has been born again. They are the beneficiaries of the grace of our Lord, of the love of God, and of the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 13:14).

When the apostle wrote to Corinth he told them they had been called into the fellowship of Jesus Christ. They were torn by partisan strife, tolerant of immorality, intolerant of the scruples of the brethren, impleading each other in heathen courts, and even so factious they could not eat the love feast together. He was fearful of coming among them lest he find quarreling, jealousy, anger, selfishness, slander, gossip, deceit and disorder. Yet he did not tell "the faithful" to go and start a "loyal" congregation! He did not even intimate that he would split them and take out a group when he arrived. He asked, "Do you not know that Jesus Christ is in you?— unless indeed you fail to meet the test" (2 Cor. 13:5). What was the test? Was it an attitude as to classes for Bible study, individual cups, fermented wine, unleavened bread, orphan homes, etc.? These are tests which men have concocted to shatter and split into factious groups those who are in the fellowship.

God devised no such tests. Jesus Christ can be in men, who in their weakness and ignorance, differ in opinion as to these things. Paul said "What we pray for is your improvement" (2 Cor. 13:9). Not once in all of the divine revelation of God was a congregation of believers ever advised to split or separate. Not once was a group of believers told to come out from, or separate themselves from the other believers. If so, where is the place? Paul did not advise the congregation of Corinth to divide. He did not advise the establishment of two "Churches of Christ" in Corinth— one a "heathen courts congregation" and the other an "anti-heathen courts congregation."

Here is what he wrote: "Mend your ways, heed my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace, and the God

of love and peace will be with you." Never in the checkered history of the saints has this exhortation been needed more than at present. Every word needs to burn and sear our hearts until "we put no obstacle in any one's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry" (2 Cor. 6:3). The Christian life is difficult enough in these days without adding an extra burden of hate and animosity kindled by the factious spirit. Let us labor for unity![13]

In his third essay in this series, Ketcherside comments briefly on the status of the pious unimmersed:

> **Every honest, sincere believer in the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth is my brother, either in prospect or in fact. If such a believer has submitted to immersion on the basis of his faith in Jesus, he is my brother in reality, a child of God, and a member of His family. He may not have understood all of the blessings accruing from baptism into Christ, and he may have been mistaken as to the time of the bestowal of some of them, but his ignorance of effect or time will not nullify God's grace or promise, if he surrenders his will to that of the Messiah. Since his birth, he may be in error about many things pertaining to his responsibility, worship or service, and he may require a tremendous amount of teaching and adjustment, but he is still my brother, and I will teach him as a brother, and not count him as a pagan or an infidel. If our hearts are both honest we will grow ever closer to each other as we both "grow in grace and knowledge of the truth." The transformation in our lives through conformity to the life of Christ, will produce uniformity of heart and thought in the two of us.**
>
> **Not all believers have been immersed. Some are still in the womb of the new covenant, the Jerusalem that is from above. What shall be my attitude toward these who are in that state? It will be the same as that of a family toward an unborn child. We do not revile, castigate or belittle a child in the womb. We rejoice that it has been conceived and with an air of expectancy prepare for its**

arrival. So I shall labor to aid those who have been conceived by faith, to come to birth and full delivery into the glorious fellowship of the sons of God. If they die before delivery I shall mourn our loss; if they are born again I shall seek to nurture, strengthen and support them until they can walk alone. To this I am dedicated, believing it is the will of him whose slave I have become.[14]

Subsequently, Ketcherside proposes that agreement in understanding is a result of— not the basis for— our fellowship in Christ:

> *Fellowship in Christ is not the result of our agreement upon matters of opinion and interpretation; but our agreement upon things comes as result of our fellowship***.**
>
> **Do you ask what is so great about that? First, it is the exact reverse of what most of us have been taught and have taught. It may, therefore, produce unity where our previous attitude has produced division and disunity. It is obvious that our past course has produced grievous disorders in the ranks of the spiritual. We have been looking for something which cannot and does not exist outside of Christ, as the very ground for our proper association in Him.**
>
> **Second, it begins with fellowship and ends with agreement; whereas we have been trying to start with agreement and work toward fellowship. But it has been impossible to agree because we have had an improper attitude toward each other. We have regarded each other as aliens, enemies and opponents. We have been suspicious of each other. We have been fearful of one another. We have credited each other with false motivations. In this spirit the area of disagreement has widened. Fellowship has been thrust further away. We thought that we could not love each other as brethren until we agreed, yet we could not agree until we loved each other as brethren. This produced an impasse with a new faction given birth almost every year.**

It would seem that if a doctor tried the same prescription time after time, and each time the patient died, he would want to begin to change. Common sense would seem to dictate to us that we are abject failures in one of the greatest enterprises upon earth, and that if we continue to pursue our present course we will end up hating one another and spiritually bankrupt. There simply has to be a better way than the one we have taken. It has led us in all of the wrong places.

Third, this places our fellowship in proper perspective. It makes it infinitely greater than any matter of interpretation or any difference of opinion. In the past even minor opinions have been deemed greater than fellowship. As a result fellowship has been sacrificed at every disagreement. The body has been cleaved asunder every time a wart appeared. In reality, there is room for differences and disagreements inside the circle of fellowship, provided the royal law of love is not forgotten or forsaken. As it is, this sovereign principle has been disregarded and dethroned every time there has arisen a disagreement. Love is the spiritual law of gravity which draws us toward a common center. So long as it is operative, we all may differ greatly on many things, and still remain in the domain of Christ, even as men may differ in the political world and still remain citizens of the United States.

Fourth, fellowship is attained at once through the grace of God, while agreement upon spiritual implications and interpretations may be the work of years, and achieved only through intensive study and mutual intercourse of thought. We are called into the fellowship by God. We arrive at understanding through the exercise of our rational faculties. To recognize that fellowship is a state or relationship into which we are brought by divine power, and to conceive of every immersed believing penitent as being in that relationship, will allow our own spirits to expand and the love of God will then be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been

given unto us.

Fifth, this concept, if understood and taught, will assure that not another division will ever occur among those who sincerely love Christ. Moreover, a number of breaches now existing will be healed. We recognize that "there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized" (1 Cor. 11:19). In the past, the genuine ones could not be recognized, because they joined up with one or the other of the factions. We take it that if two parties were created in the church, the genuine ones would not be recognized if they aligned themselves with either. The genuine ones are those who refuse to be factional.

If a congregation is divided into parties over an interpretation of Revelation 20, and there is a pre-millennial and a post-millennial faction formed, the genuine ones, regardless of their views on the millennial question, would recognize all as brethren, and refuse to become partisans in the matter. Those who are genuine exalt Jesus above any opinion and refuse to divide those who are in Him; those who are factional exalt an opinion above Jesus and refuse to recognize those who differ as even being in Him. Our misconception of the New Testament teaching has tended to make more of us factional than genuine!

But what about our guarding of the truth? There is a great difference between guarding the truth and an opinion about the truth. Truth need not be protected. It was given to protect us. It needs to be turned loose and not kept tied up or kept in prison for its own protection. But an opinion about truth is always subject to examination and scrutiny by others. And their opinion may be as good as ours.

Fellowship is not a fruit of agreement but agreement is the fruit of fellowship! **Does the Bible teach that? Do we come to be in the fellowship because we are of the same mind, or do we come to be of one mind because we are in**

the fellowship? Much depends upon the answer you give. If we come into fellowship by agreement upon opinions, then how many things must we agree upon, and which ones, before fellowship commences? If we must agree upon all views and opinions then no fellowship at all exists today for no two persons are wholly agreed. If we need not agree upon all, who is to determine which ones we may eliminate from the area of agreement without impairing fellowship? If we decide which opinions and views we must agree upon to have fellowship, what happens if one learns more on some point and changes his mind? Shall he be put out of the fellowship for "growing in knowledge"? On the basis that fellowship is contingent upon agreement in matters of opinion, no congregation existing a hundred years ago could now be in fellowship, and no congregation now existing would be in the fellowship a hundred years from now if our Lord tarry that long.

No such difficulty is encountered if we regard fellowship in the proper light. Allowance will be made for ignorance on many points a century ago, and for the increase of knowledge a century in the future. Neither ignorance nor growth affect fellowship unless the first is willful and the second disregards the principle of love. One cannot be too ignorant to be in the fellowship and cannot grow too greatly to be a part of it. There will be room for minds that are liberal and conservative to work together in love, the first lending fresh outlook and new vision, the latter exercising proper restraint to keep the progress within the pale of God's revelation. But is this concept scriptural? We assert that it is!

Every admonition in the New Testament to be of one mind, to agree among yourselves, or to speak the same thing, was given to those who were in fellowship. In no case were brethren told to achieve peace in order to be in fellowship, but, having been called into fellowship, they were to achieve peace. "And above all these put on love which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ dwell in your hearts, to which

indeed you were called in the one body" (Col. 3:14, 15). It was those who were in the one body who were to put on love, and to allow the peace of Christ to rule.

Paul wrote to the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi with their bishops and deacons and instructed them to "Complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love being in full accord and of one mind" (Phil. 2:2). His joy began when they entered the fellowship of Christ. As they grew closer to each other in that area and achieved unity of thought and purpose, his joy and theirs abounded. "I shall remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith" (1:25). On what basis were they told to achieve the same mind, the same love, and full accord? The previous verse hinges its accomplishment upon "encouragement in Christ, the incentive of love, the participation (fellowship) in the Spirit." With such encouragement, incentive and fellowship they were to labor toward unity of thought. But while they were struggling the fellowship was not impaired!

The church of God at Corinth was composed of those who "were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor. 1:9). It was because they were in the fellowship, that the apostle said, "I appeal to you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree that there be no dissensions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and in the same judgment." They were rent into schismatic groups but were still in the fellowship. Paul pleads with all of them as *brethren***, regardless of the party names they wore. To them all he recommends love as the answer to their predicament, for "love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, endures all things" (13:4-7). Paul rises above all partisanship in this letter. He takes sides with neither group, not even with those who said "We are of Paul." He addresses them all as brethren,**

and admonishes them "as my beloved children." He says, "Finally, brethren, farewell. Mend your ways, heed my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace and the God of peace will be with you" (2 Cor. 13:11).

Let us again state this revolutionary principle. *Fellowship in Christ is not contingent upon agreement upon matters of interpretation and opinion; but agreement in these is contingent upon fellowship.* **What practical changes will be made by recognition and application of this law.**[15]

In concluding this essay, he suggests a way to avoid endless division among the heirs of the restoration movement:

We are today exactly where our thinking has brought us. We will be tomorrow exactly where our thinking takes us. If we will change the tragic picture of division, desolation and spiritual destruction, we must alter our thinking. So long as we seek to achieve fellowship by agreement upon propositions we will divide every time someone learns a new truth. Unity will not be achieved by external documents and forms. It must come from within. It must probe the deepest thoughts of our hearts. It must plumb the very depths of our beings. It must bubble up through all of the debris of years of wrong thinking and seek the surface of new lives.

We must feel that we are one in Him with every other person who has accepted Him as Lord. That feeling will do more to promote peace, and prove to be a surer bond of lasting union than all of the pacts, concordats and comity agreements men have written. We are in fellowship! We are one in Christ Jesus! We have been raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places! We were all part of the original redemption agreement. We were all set free by the grace of God. The Holy Spirit dwells within us as a seal of our fellowship with God and with each other. Under the benign influence of that Spirit, let us move closer to having one mind, the same love and full accord. God hasten the day! Peace must

be waged, as others wage war and strife.[16]

In his eighth installment of "Thoughts On Fellowship," Ketcherside inserts an 1844 quote by Tolbert Fanning, who, along with David Lipscomb, co-founded the *Gospel Advocate*:

> **What is the love of the brethren? Perhaps on no subject has the human heart been driven to greater extremes, than what is generally termed love of the brethren. The boundaries of each faction are usually the limits of the love of the respective denominations; while the deep and abiding hatred of most religionists is limited only by the universe. Romanists love their own; Calvinists love Calvinists; Arminians love not all Arminians, but each Arminian sect rejoices in itself alone. Deep seated party prejudice is the 'love of God' in party religions. Baptists feel in their souls that they love Baptists, and hence fancy that this prejudice is the love of the brethren, and indubitable evidence of a passage from death unto life.**[17]

Ketcherside then comments:

> **To this poignant statement might well be added in our generation the "Churches of Christ." It is well known that the brotherhood is restricted to those who agree upon certain things which have been elevated to a prominence they do not possess and are made tests of fellowship. Each group has its own brotherhood and there is no such thing as the "brotherhood." If deep seated party prejudice produced this state among those who are not of us, as enumerated by Brother Fanning, pray what produces it among us?**[18]

Ketcherside goes on to say:

> **We are not in the fellowship because we understand everything alike, or because we have reached a certain stage of spiritual development. We did not come into the fellowship by making an "A" on a test on doctrinal**

matters, or by passing a test. The fact is that we are in all sorts of developmental stages from lisping babes to mature men. Even those who are mature have much yet to learn. The fact is that we will never pass beyond the disciple stage in this life. "The brotherhood" we are told to love (1 Peter 2:17) does not consist merely of those who agree with us upon some controversial point such as Bible classes, colleges, individual cups, the pastor system, contribution baskets, long hair, or a manner of breaking the bread. There are those who would like to limit it to those who wear ties, have their hair cropped and have no beard. But they are schismatic and factional in their outlook. They suffer from restricted vision and spiritual astigmatism. "The brotherhood" of Christ stems from the fatherhood of God. Jesus is not ashamed to call us brethren because we have the same Father as himself. He said "Go to my *brethren*, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father" (John 20:17).

Every person on this earth who is a child of God is my brother. He is in "the brotherhood." When we talk of the brotherhood in such a manner as to exclude any of God's children we are sectarian. We are also ignorant. We reflect not upon the children but upon the Father when we deny their paternity. In an attempt to defend our own views we actually exclude God. Such a partisan usage of the term is quite frequent. It is promoted by factional leaders and editors. I regularly receive a number of journals and reports of those preachers who contribute news to them. All speak of work "in the brotherhood" but they do not speak as the Bible does. They do not mean the same thing by the term that the word means.

To one the brotherhood is limited to those who oppose classes, to another those who use fermented wine in the Lord's Supper, to another those who break the bread in a certain fashion, to another those who oppose orphan homes, to another those who object to individual cups, to another those who employ instrumental music, to another those who oppose its use.

It is a rather strange phenomenon that all of these various factions have a paper, and generally the editor and certain chosen cohorts in his favor, constitute the ruling hierarchy of each "brotherhood." Regardless of how you stand in the grace of God, if you do not continue in the good graces of the editor, you will be ruined and hounded out of the brotherhood. You must "walk the chalk line" and bow to the whim of the editor, or you will be "drummed out of the corps." Nothing is more certain than your falling into disgrace if you dare to oppose the pet project of "the powers that be." Why men will allow themselves to become so enslaved that they dare not think for themselves constitutes the anomaly of the ages.[19]

Ketcherside's final thoughts on fellowship include the following admonitions:

Those who prefer to maintain the status quo will never answer the prayer of Jesus. They stand athwart His path and hinder the accomplishment of the divine purpose. We must be discontent to perpetuate human parties with human names and human aims. These but pamper our pride. We must sigh and cry for something better than what we have. We must pray for unity and toil to achieve it. We must agonize in prayer, and bombard the ramparts of heaven night and day with our petitions.

Above all, we must love every soul for whom Jesus died. The love of God must be shed abroad in our hearts. It must be the motivating principle of our lives. Then, regardless of what men may do to us, we will triumph over hate and envy. We will serve those who would destroy us, help those who would ruin us, and do good unto all men. Love never fails. It never quits either. If we stand upon love, we will stand forever. Nothing can shake us. And this will work as leaven, for it is the leaven of God. It is our only hope of survival. It is the key to future happiness and security. There is no other alternative. We must love all men or perish! We must find the way to oneness, or miss the way to heaven.[20]

Ketcherside on Agape as the Basis of Christian Fellowship

In early 1972, Carl Ketcherside released a 224-page book titled *The Parable of Telstar and Other Talks.* Chapters 4–7, originally presented as talks for a convocation of college and high school students, analyze the first chapter of 1 Thessalonians. In chapter 5, Ketcherside writes:

> **The word for love is the Greek *agape*. It is a special word in the new covenant scriptures. The Holy Spirit captured it for the *use* of God, and invested it with new value, and gave it a depth of meaning which it did not have before. It literally took on a new dimension of height and depth, so it can be said that God is love. I want to mention some of the attributes of this love. This will enable you to determine if you possess it and if it is the motivating factor in your every act of life.**
>
> **1. This love is not a mere emotion or passion. You cannot command an emotion. But you can command this love because Jesus said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another as I have loved you." Commands are given to be obeyed, and obedience is an act of the will. If Jesus tells us to love our brethren we must do it. Because this is an act of will, and not merely of our feelings, we can even love our enemies. Someone sent me a plaque for my wall which reads: "Love Your Enemies— It Drives Them Nuts!" The command is correct, the motivation is questionable.**
>
> **2. This love does not manifest itself because the object is worthy or deserving. If it did God could never have loved us at all, and we would all have been damned. *Agape* is creative. It conveys its own value to the object or person and invests that object or person with its sense of worth so that love is possible.**
>
> **3. This love is never hampered, restricted, or deterred by external circumstances. It is steadfast and not intermittent, constant and not occasional. Jesus never got**

anyone out of what he was in to love him. He loved him to get him out of what he was in. He did not say, "Straighten up your life and I will love you." He loved people and they straightened up their lives.

4. This love is not merely the giving of *things* to supply needs, but rather the sharing of self. Since God is love, when he sent the Son to share our lot it amounted to love becoming embodied, so that, in beholding *Jesus*, we could see divine love activated in our behalf. One can give *things* as a blind to keep from giving self, or as an escape from becoming truly involved. Love is involvement of one's life in the life situation of others.

5. This love is always active and not passive. It is ever seeking avenues of service. It is outgoing and outreaching in constantly expanding circles of influence. It is more a demonstration than it is an affirmation. One who truly loves another must do something to show it. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." The word to be emphasized in that statement is the word "so." God loved the world in such a manner that he had to do something about it.

Love validates every gift that we receive and use. If we had the power to employ the languages of men and the dialect of heaven, without love we would become like a sounding brass or a clashing cymbal. Love also validates every gift we bestow. If we gave all of our earthly possessions to feed the world's poor, and offered our bodies to be burned at the stake, it would profit nothing without love.

Love labors to help others who are caught up in the human predicament. It shares the burdens, carries loads, and relieves distress. It is the introduction of the God-dimension into human problems, the creativity of heaven meeting the tragedy of earthly existence.

God is its author, Jesus is its exemplar, the Holy Spirit its conveyor. It is the criterion by which the world

judges our discipleship and the rod by which we measure our own spirituality. It is the light of the world and the life of the spirit. It is the oasis in the desert, the guiding star in the sky, and the mountain peak of glory and grace.[21]

Of the more than 1,300 essays written by Ketcherside, forty-six were published in *Restoration Review*, edited by Leroy Garrett. One such essay, "Agape: Foundation of Christian Fellowship," appeared in the February 1963 issue. It was later included in *Thoughts on Unity* (1971), edited by Stanley Paregien and published by Mission Messenger.

Ketcherside begins by taking note of a feature of the Greek language that allows for subtle distinctions in meaning. He then transitions to the subject of his essay:

> **"Love is of God." This statement in 1 John 4:7 accepted so nonchalantly by those of us who live this side of the cross was clearly beyond the grasp of the ancients. Certainly they knew much about love and a great deal about God, but the relationship between the two was never understood until it was revealed. That revelation came not in mere words as a system of doctrine for this love cannot be wholly confined to speech. "Let us not love in word or speech but in deed and in truth." "God is love." God is a person. If God is love then love is personal. This is different than saying that a person is love, for many persons are not loving or lovable. God is love but love is not God.**
>
> **Because love is personal the highest manifestation of love is in the form of a person. "In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world" (1 John 4:9). We must not overlook the significance of the term "love was *made* manifest." It is not merely that love, in the abstract, was manifested to us, or toward us. It was made manifest among us. It became embodied, personal and visible. It could be heard, seen with the eyes and handled with the hands.[22]**

After reviewing the use of the Greek word for love, *philia*, and its verb form, *phileo*, Ketcherside examines the use of the word *eros*:

> **Another word familiar to the Greeks was eros. In the classics this was the term employed to designate the amorous relations between the sexes. It became the term to express the passionate feeling demonstrated in sensuality and has come down to us in the word erotic, which is defined, "Of, relating to, or treating of sexual love, amatory." This word is never used in the new covenant scriptures in any of its forms, a fact about which Archbishop Trench, in his *Synonyms of the New Testament* comments as follows: "Their absence is significant. It is in part no doubt to be explained from the fact that, by the corrupt use of the word, they had become so steeped in sensual passion, carried such an atmosphere of unholiness about them, that the truth of God abstained from the defiling contact with them, yea, devised a new word rather than betake itself of one of these."**
>
> **The new word to which Trench alludes is *agape*, but it is possible that his conclusion with regard to the motive involved in avoidance of *eros* is not wholly justifiable in the light of the real facts. Testimony commonly quoted in support of the viewpoint is generally traceable back to Trench's thesis, and is derivative and dependent, rather than original. This only serves to show how popular and widespread was the influence of the book on synonyms which was first published at Cambridge in 1854. The religious scholarship of the world is always in debt to one who does such monumental research. Frequently, however, it is accepted as the final word on a subject and tends to stifle and discourage further investigation.**
>
> **In our own day a great deal of study has been done on the relationship of *eros* and *agape* and the contrast between the two concepts which they represent. This renewed concern has been intensified by publication of a book which is considered to be one of the most important**

theological works of the twentieth century, *Agape and Eros*, by Anders Nygren. The author was ordained to the ministry of the Church of Sweden at the age of twenty-one and is now Bishop of Lund. As a result of his thesis there has been a stimulation of thought with reference to love within the Christian framework. This is especially true with the Scandinavian school of thought represented by such scholars as Anton Fridrichsen, Nils Johanson, Erik Sjoberg, *et. al*.

It is not essential to our presentation that we critically examine the difference between *eros* and *agape*. Enough works devoted to this theme are now available to the English reader that we could contribute nothing new or original. Our interest is not primarily in a word never used by the Holy Spirit but in one employed repeatedly by the divine agent of revelation. Suffice it to say, then, that eros is a love evoked or motivated by the beauty and worth of its object. *Agape* is spontaneous and unmotivated. *Eros* recognizes the value in its object and loves it; *agape* loves its object and creates the value within it. It has been pointed out by Nygren that *eros* represents an upward movement. It is man's way to God. *Agape* bends down and stoops to share our human lot. It is God's way to man.[23]

Ketcherside then offers a working definition of *agape,* and explains the terms he uses:

It seems to me that in our struggle for efficiency in communication we frequently become victims of our own definitive process. We are so concerned to have an agreed upon standard for the meaning of our word symbols that we allow the dictionary to become our jailer as well as our judge. It serves not only to refine but also to confine our thinking. It is a false assumption that every great ideal is fully definable in human terms. Just as there are some things which cannot be purchased for money, our medium of exchange in the economic realm, so there are some things that cannot be secured by words, the medium of exchange in the rational domain. One such concept is

agape. **My own definition is admittedly feeble and weak. My only comfort lies in the fact that a definition provided by any other would also be inadequate.**

Agape **is "the energetic and beneficent good will which stops at nothing to serve the good of the beloved object." I have frequently broken this down into its components in an endeavor to distill from it everything that is extraneous and redundant. As it now stands it represents my own frail and feeble mental approach to a concept so vast that it is beyond complete description or definition. I ask your own analytical scrutiny of it that you may see how I view the word** *agape* **and why I say that it is the very foundation of all** *koinonia*, **fellowship, in God and with man. To the extent that we understand the implications of** *agape* **our fellowship is strengthened and abounds. To the degree that we do not grasp it our fellowship must languish.**

First, observe the word "will." Other words for love represent an act of affection, but *agape* **is an act of achievement in the individual through the Spirit. It is not the expression of an emotion but the adoption of a principle by which to live. As respects** *agape* **one does not fall in love, he deliberately stoops to share. There is a difference between falling when you cannot help it and bending down purposely to help another. This accounts for the fact that love can be commanded. "These things I command you, that ye love one another" (John 15:17). The emotions cannot be commanded and an overt demonstration of them under compulsion would be mere pretense or hypocrisy. But that which is an act of will is subject to command.**

By the same token the degree or intensity of that which results from exercise of will can be regulated by that will. Thus a command can be issued to increase the demonstration of love. "But as touching brotherly love (*philadelphia***) ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love (***agapao***) one another.**

And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more" (1 Thess. 4:9-10). Thus, the apostle can write, "And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you the less I be loved" (2 Cor. 12:15).

Next, observe that *agape* **is always and unvaryingly** *good* **will. In that wonderful description of its attributes and characteristics given by the apostle in 1 Corinthians 13, he specifically says, "It does not keep account of evil or gloat over the wickedness of other people. On the contrary, it is glad with all good men when truth prevails" (J. B. Phillips translation). It is not selfish or egocentric. It does not seek for revenge or justification because its mere possession is its own justification. Like wisdom, it is justified by its own fruit or offspring.**

It is *beneficent* **good will. For this reason, it can be extended even to one's enemies. It differs from** *philia,* **which is affection for the pleasing, and** *eros* **which is passion for the beautiful and attractive.** *Agape* **is the ability to love those whom you cannot like. We like those of the same temperament, disposition and nature as ourselves, that is, we like those who are like ourselves. But the spirit of** *agape* **enables us to exert a beneficent goodwill, born of real concern, toward those who are unlike us and even antagonistic toward us. "God is** *agape***." Therefore, God could love the world, and so love it as to give his Son. "But Christ died for us while we were yet sinners, and that is God's own proof of his love (***agape***) toward us" (Romans 5:8). It was "when we were God's enemies we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son" (verse 10).**

Just as God proved his *agape* **by what he did for us while we were his enemies so we prove that we are his children in the same fashion. "But you must love (***agapao***) your enemies and do good; and lend without expecting any return; and you will have a rich reward: you will be sons of the Most High, because he himself is kind to the**

ungrateful and wicked. Be compassionate as your Father is compassionate" (Luke 6:35-36). To the extent that we stop and question what we will get out of it our actions are motivated by *eros*. *Agape* is spontaneous and unmotivated. The love which is bestowed in order to receive response is prompted more by the need of the giver than that of the receiver. It is not a benefaction but an investment.

We have defined *agape* as being energetic as well as beneficent. This is important to a grasp of the nature of this love. "Energy" is a combined form of the Greek *en*, in and *ergon*, work. It relates to that force which operates in and through a thing because it is inherent in it. *Agape* is not a force acted upon but a power which acts upon. It is creative while self-effacing. In a happy translation of 1 Corinthians 13:4, J. B. Phillips has caught this thought. "The love of which I speak is slow to lose patience— it looks for a way of being constructive. It is not possessive; it is neither anxious to impress nor does it cherish inflated ideas of its own importance." *Agape* is creative. It is a fruit of the Spirit and the Spirit is what brought order out of chaos in the primeval world. The Spirit performs the same function relative to the problems of the new creation.[24]

In Ketcherside's view, Paul's use of *agape* in his letter to the Ephesians is particularly significant:

The relationship of *agape* to the fellowship can best be understood by an examination of its use in the letter to the Ephesians, that great epistle of togetherness. In Ephesians 1:5-6 it is affirmed that "He destined us in love (agape) to be his sons through Jesus Christ according to the purpose of his will." Fellowship is based upon sonship, fraternity is based upon paternity. This is not a mere afterthought of God. It is our destiny because it was his purpose and his will. God's purpose is a unity plan and it is universal in scope. "For he has made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of his will, according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fulness of time, to unite all things in heaven and things on

earth" (1:9-10).

The plan began by a magnificent work of grace in which man was reconciled unto God. Grace is extended not to the worthy but to the unworthy. It is always undeserved kindness. In this instance it was bestowed upon those who were sons of disobedience and children of wrath. It was those destined to punishment whom God destined to be his sons. In order to achieve this through Jesus Christ it was necessary that these be made alive together with Christ. This transformation which resulted in a new creation was an outgrowth of *agape*. "But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love (*agape*) with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved) and raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:5-6).

Ponder well the threefold use of the word "with" in this one sentence. The great *agape* of God made us alive together with Christ, raised us up together with him, made us sit together with him. Here is divine *agape* functioning in three ways— resurrection, elevation and participation — with Christ Jesus. The plan to unite all things in him actually began by uniting things in heaven and things on earth. Alienation gave way to adoption, antagonism to acceptance.[25]

Ketcherside continues:

It is not at all surprising that the apostle urges us in chapter 4:1-3 to put *agape* to work in the complex field of human relationships. The saints are urged to walk worthy of the calling to which they were called. Phillips translates it, "Accept life with humility and patience, making allowance for each other because you love (*agapao*) each other. Make it your aim to be at one with the Spirit and you will inevitably be at peace with one another." This implies that peace with one another is conditioned upon

oneness with the Spirit. Harmony is not the same as conformity. There will always be diversity but there need not be disunity. If we have *agape* for one another we will make allowances. Love takes into consideration every circumstance. It gives the other person the benefit of the doubt and never doubts the benefit of doing so. The apostle says in 1 Corinthians 13:5, "Love has good manners and does not pursue selfish advantage. It is not touchy."

Anton Fridrichsen writes, "What is agape in the New Testament? Love is unity in the community and with the community. According to the New Testament thought that is unity with Christ. When in Colossians 3:14 love is called 'the bond of perfectness' that means it is that which constitutes unity in the church (that is, perfectness). As the church is the Spirit's creation and work, love is the Spirit's first and most important fruit. There can be no real fellowship without love. *Agape* is the light in which we must walk as God is that light, if we are to have fellowship one with another (1 John 1:7). We are not required to have the knowledge that God possesses to be in fellowship with Him or others, but we are required to have His *agape* if we are to be regarded as "children of the Most High."

If we attempt to produce unity by human creeds, confessions and concordats, we shall fail. It cannot be secured by dogma, decree or document. The unity of the Spirit is a gift of the Spirit to those who have the fruits of the Spirit and the first one of those fruits mentioned is *agape* (Gal. 5:23). While we try to bring about unity by conformity and base it upon affiliation with those whom we like we are sowing the seed of division. It is only when we love brethren whom we cannot like, those whose speech and actions grate upon our ears and nerves that we are walking in the footsteps of Jesus. It is not so much that we must like those with whom we sit together physically as that we love those with whom we are knit together spiritually. Paul prays for some "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love" (agape). There

is a difference between being tied together and being knit together. In the first, personal identity is preserved; in the second, it is interwoven and lost. The first is the result of *eros,* **the second of** *agape.*

We cannot afford to overlook the implication of the word love in two more passages in Ephesians, chapter four. After mentioning the bestowal of grace upon each according to the measure of the gift of Christ, the apostle affirms three things about Jesus. He ascended on high, he led a multitude of captives with him, and he bestowed gifts upon men. In clarification of this last statement he shows that these gifts to the people of God were special functionaries adapted to the developing of the saints. It was never the purpose of God that the body should grow through being ministered unto, but by ministering. It is as each part performs its work that the body moves toward maturity. Yet it is obvious that to be able to do this the members must be trained. For this reason Jesus has provided special functionaries or gifts.

"And his gifts were that some should be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, teaching pastors." The purpose of these special servants is specified as follows: "With a view to training or adapting the saints to carry on the work of service unto the building up of the body of Christ." The evangelists and elders are to train the saints to minister. The community of God is an army. As enlistees, its members require training to carry on the warfare. They must be brought to and kept in combat readiness.

Verse 15 affirms that these must speak the truth in love (agape), and grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ. As I see it, the apostle does not here refer to our manner of expression when we speak. He is not saying we should be gentle and considerate in our choice and usage of words. All that is true, of course, and we should avoid rudeness and harshness. But to "speak the truth in *agape"* **means to be constructive, helpful and**

upbuilding. *Agape* seeks the good of its object and we need to be certain that we have the proper goal and motive in our hearts. This will assist us toward maturity in all of the facets of Christian conduct.

Verse 16 points out that edification of the body is rooted in *agape.* Such edification results when the entire body is fitly joined together and the divine adhesive is love. When the members of the body effectively work together instead of against each other, when every joint supplies that which it is designed to supply and all are related through Christ Jesus, the result can be nothing but spiritual edification. All hope of spiritual strength lies in the implementation of love. With love our consecration grows, without it disintegration comes. Love brings increase and satisfaction, its absence produces decrease and petrifaction.[26]

In March of 1963, another essay on fellowship by Ketcherside, "The Ground of Christian Fellowship," was published in *Restoration Review*. In it, Ketcherside first defines the English word *fellowship*:

Our English word, "fellowship," represents a combination of two forms. "Fellow" is found to be derived from the Old Norse *felagi,* comrade. This is from the root *felag,* partnership. "Ship" comes to us from the Anglo-Saxons. It is a noun-forming suffix added chiefly to nouns denoting persons. It denotes, as used in "fellowship," a state or condition, that is, a relationship. We should note two important things about this suffix. First, it is added to nouns, and by being thus added it forms new nouns. Second, it denotes a state or condition related to the original noun which generally denotes persons. We shall refer to these points later on in our thesis.

With one exception known to me, the word "fellowship" in the King James Version is used to translate the Greek word *koinonia,* or some form of this word. This term is derived from *koinon,* the word for "common." This

word in both English and Greek has two meanings. It may signify that which belongs to the community at large, or the entire scope of life together in a society. It may also designate that which is ordinary, general, or commonplace as opposed to that which is rare and distinguished. It is in this sense it is used, for that which was not consecrated or *kosher,* **in Acts 10:14.**

The word *koinonia* **expresses that state or condition in which persons hold things in common. It signifies a sharing, and it is that which is shared, or held in common, which creates the fellowship. A common synonym is "partnership." In Luke 5:7, 10, James and John were called partners** *(koinonoi)* **of Simon Peter. The context establishes that this relationship existed in reference to the occupation of fishing. It is not to be supposed that they were in agreement upon all matters related to life, or even to fishing. Such was not essential to their** *koinonia,* **or partnership. They were partners because they were united in a common enterprise. They had a mutual objective and by contract or agreement, they pursued it together, sharing in whatever gains or losses accrued.**

Because man is a social being and develops his unfolding personality best in association with others, God has ordained a society of the redeemed ones to which one is added when born again of the water and of the Spirit. This society is designated the *ekklesia* **in the Greek language. The word is commonly translated "church" in our tongue. This is an unfortunate translation for several valid reasons. A much better one is "community." A community consists of those who are bound to each other by common ties. It is noteworthy that "unity" is a part of "community." The community which Jesus planted upon the rock is a fellowship. It is the koinonia of the redeemed ones, those who have responded to the call, thus are "the called out." It is the response to the call which creates the fellowship. This is what brings them together, and fellowship is togetherness elevated to spiritual status and sanctified by the blood of the slain Lamb of God.**[27]

With regard to the nature of fellowship, Ketcherside explains:

> **There is no single English word adequate to portray the full depth of the Greek *koinonia*. The term "fellowship" only approximates, and never exhausts the meaning. Unfortunately, it has taken on certain connotations which serve to confuse rather than to enlighten, so that the assumption that the English "fellowship" is exactly synonymous to the Greek koinonia does an injustice to the latter and militates against an understanding of all of its implications.**
>
> **Even more to be deplored is the fact that among the heirs of the Restoration Movement there is not only a lack of understanding relative to the Greek terms, but a tragic misunderstanding of the English word. We have pointed out that the suffix "ship" is added to nouns and in the combination thus effected creates new noun forms. In spite of this, it is a common thing to hear the question, "Do you fellowship this person, or that one?" Among those with whom I am more closely allied, the question is frequently asked, "Do you fellowship the Christian Church?" Or it may be phrased, "Do you fellowship those who use instrumental music?" Regardless of how well informed such a querist may be regarding the arguments on instrumental music, he demonstrates a woeful ignorance of even the basic nature of fellowship.**
>
> **We do not ask, "Do you partnership Mr. Brown?" or, "Do you companionship your wife?" or "Do you sonship your father?" On what grounds then do we justify such expressions as, "Do you fellowship such a person?" Fellowship is a state or relation. All who enter into that state or relation are in the fellowship. It is not the result accruing from the state or relationship. It is the state! It is the relationship! Whatever brings one into the relationship brings him into the fellowship. That which initiates him into the community introduces him into the koinonia, or fellowship.**

Another tragic error derives from overlooking the fact that the suffix is added to nouns denoting persons, in such forms as we are now considering. Fellowship is not a relation to things, but to persons. It does not signify a relation to things, either tangible or intangible, nor to ideas, views or interpretations. These may, or may not, form the basis of fellowship, but the fellowship is a relation sustained to each other by persons. The very word "fellow" shows that, for it means "a comrade or associate." In some colloquial usage, it actually means "a person."[28]

Fellowship, Ketcherside observes, is *of* the Spirit:

The *koinonia* of which we speak is designated the "fellowship of the Spirit" (Phil. 2:1). It is used in conjunction with exhortation in Christ, consolation of love, tender mercies and compassions. I consider that the fellowship here specified is that which is secured by imbibing of the one Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13). "The unity of the Spirit" which we are enjoined to guard or maintain "In the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3) results from the indwelling of the same Spirit in all who sustain a covenant relationship to God. Despite the diversities of gifts bestowed by the Spirit in a supernatural age, there was but one Spirit. "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:4). And despite our diversities of natural gifts we are all the temples of the same Spirit. Herein lies the secret of maintaining the fellowship, for it is a fellowship of the Spirit!

Fellowship is sharing. The life of fellowship is a life of sharing. Can we arrive at a statement which will properly portray the nature of the communion or fellowship we sustain through Christ? Such a statement must be broad enough to encompass our relationship to Deity as well as to the redeemed society of mankind. In 1 John 1:3 it is affirmed that "our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." In verse seven it is said, "We have fellowship one with another." Any definition of our relationship must point toward God and

> **toward those who are in Christ. It is spiritually axiomatic that God always conditions His requirements of us upon what He has done for us. We love because He first loved us. We come to Him because He first came to us. We share with others what He has shared with us. It is upon this basis that we suggest that fellowship on the divine side is a union with Christ and a participation in His life through the indwelling Spirit; while on the human side it is a partnership of brethren whose mutual relations were transformed by the gift bestowed upon them.[29]**

Ketcherside asserts that one enters the fellowship through the "belief of one fact and the obedience of one act." This concept, he adds, was enunciated at the outset of the Restoration Movement by Alexander Campbell, whom he then quotes:

> **But the grandeur, sublimity, and beauty of the foundation of hope, and of ecclesiastical or social union, established by the author and founder of Christianity, consisted in this: *that the belief of one fact,* and that upon the best evidence in the world, is all that is requisite, as far as faith goes to salvation. The belief of this *one fact,* and submission *to one institution* expressive of it, is all that is required of heaven to admission into the church."[30]**

In the context of the above statement, Campbell explains, "The one fact is expressed in a single proposition— that Jesus the Nazarene is the Messiah." He continues, "The one institution is baptism into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Ketcherside then adds:

> **Whatever is requisite to bring one into relationship with God, we certainly are distinctly told to welcome all whom Christ receives. We have no right to make anything a test of fellowship which God has not made a condition of salvation. Jesus says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Therefore, every sincere believer in the Messiahship and Sonship of Jesus Christ, and who is immersed in water upon the basis of that faith is God's child and my brother.[31]**

In this same vein, Ketcherside goes on to say:

> **The only question we can properly ask is relative to faith in the Sonship of the Nazarene. "Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God?" An affirmative reply to this indicates the suitability of such a person for immersion into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He may hold a hundred opinions that are peculiar, bizarre and strange to the rest of us, but this in no sense affects his entrance into the fellowship with us. He may alter and amend his opinions as he studies and matures, and such alterations and amendments, so long as they do not undermine his faith in Jesus, should not affect our relationship with him in Jesus. We must face up to the sad fact that this has not always been the basis of our procedure in the past. We have grown up in a factional atmosphere. We have inherited partisan prejudices and traditional positions. We have regarded as our brethren only those who agreed with us upon certain things which we have elevated and emphasized. We have sought to unChristianize and drive from us those who did not concur with all of our opinions.**
>
> **It seems but fair that whatever items we intend to employ as the basis of fellowship should be included in our original catechizing of a candidate for immersion. We should not deceive one into thinking that all he needs to believe in order to be regarded as a brother is that Jesus is the Son of God, then after baptism begin to attach riders or codicils to our agreement. If we do not intend to regard as a brother one who thinks that instrumental music is justified in the corporate worship of the saints, we should ask, "Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that instrumental music in the worship is a sin?" If we do not propose to regard as brothers those who hold a specific view as to the manner of the coming of our Lord, we should ask, "Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and oppose the idea of a premillennial coming?"**

It is hypocritical to proclaim that we have no creed but Christ, then after men have been induced to come in among us upon that basis, to instigate other bases and tests, and hound out upon a wholly different principle those who were received upon their acceptance of the foundation we originally announced. This is creedalism with a vengeance, sheathing its claws and purring with kindness, until time for the dispatch of the unsuspecting victim. We should either write out a bill of particulars and demands, to which prospective members must subscribe, or cease to evaluate fellowship and brotherhood upon such addenda and appendices.

By personal conviction I am opposed to the use of instrumental music in the corporate worship of the saints. I am also opposed to the premillennial interpretation of the new covenant Scriptures, as that term is commonly employed. But I refuse to be a member in, or champion of, an anti-instrument *party,* **or a post-millennial** *party.* **I am not a brother to men because they cannot conscientiously worship where an instrument is used; and for that reason I am not an enemy to those who can. They are all my brethren, but not because of a position on instrumental music, missionary societies, the millennial interpretation, classes, cups, and all that other host of things which has been allowed to sunder, sever and split us into divergent groups. We are brothers because we have been born into the same family. We have the same parents. We recognize a common Father. "Jerusalem which is from above is the mother of us all."**

The brotherhood to which I belong is not limited to the subscribers of a certain paper, the members of a specific faction, nor to those whose names appear in a certain yearbook or directory. All of these means of classifying and categorizing are factional in the final analysis. They betray our fears and are symptoms of childishness and immaturity. The brotherhood of which I am a part knows no limits set by any man or group of men. It embraces and enfolds all whom God has received.

It is not limited to those who are affiliated with some section, segment or splinter of the Restoration Movement. It may include many who never heard of it. It is a catholic brotherhood, universal in scope, consisting of all on earth, without exception, in whom the Spirit of God dwells, for its communion is "the fellowship of the Spirit."

I cannot choose my brethren. Only the Father can do that. I can welcome them, and if they are His children I *must* welcome them or insult Him by refusing and rejecting them. Does this approach to fellowship seem too broad? If so, the fault should be assessed against God. Within the bounds of my feeble and finite knowledge and judgment I accept no one whom he rejects, and reject no one whom he accepts. So long as one is as exclusive as God, can he be charged with being too inclusive? I hold that the flock of God is scattered over the sectarian hills and that our task is to reaffirm in our generation the truth concerning fellowship so that sectarianism may lose its attractiveness and the full glory and beauty of the unity of all believers in our Lord Jesus may shine forth and be the magnet to draw us all together.[32]

Ketcherside then turns to the question of what shall be done concerning *the pious unimmersed* and asks, "Will their lack of understanding, or their ignorance of this one phase of the divine will debar them from that fraternity in which we are participants?" Any answer to this question, he goes on to explain, is related to "admission to the fellowship of the saints, and not to the question of ultimate salvation." But the focus of this essay, he observes, is the *fellowship* of those who are *in Christ*.

At this point in the essay Ketcherside presents support for his conclusion that immersion is essential to entrance into the fellowship of the saints. To that end, he lists six points which he considers worthy of examination, and then concludes with a summary of his thesis in this regard:

Summarizing this portion of my thesis, and in harmony with the previously stated conviction that I dare not make anything a test of fellowship which God has not made a condition of salvation, it is my personal position that the ground of fellowship is belief in the Lord Jesus Christ expressed in obedience in the immersion of the believer. Faith and obedience— these constitute the foundation of our fellowship in him, for whatever is required to bring us into Christ, will also bring us into that relation with all others in Jesus which is called fellowship.[33]

The final section of Ketcherside's essay on the ground of Christian fellowship is subtitled "The Power Which Preserves Fellowship," from which the following excerpt is taken:

This brings me to the final point in my analysis. We must face up to the fact that we are members of a movement which has been rent and torn. Is there a power of sufficient strength to draw us together again, and having achieved that objective, to hold us together? There would be little gained for the present and nothing of permanent value in coming together only to cleave asunder in new outbreaks. If there is no such power we are doomed to continue in an ever worsening state of dissension and strife with an intensification of all the evils resulting from such a condition.

It seems presumptuous for one of my limitations to suggest that there is a remedy when so many other really capable diagnosticians have given up in despair. But "fools rush in where angels fear to tread" and thus I venture to suggest that there is hope in this dark hour. That hope lies in *agape.* **This is a term employed only in divine revelation to designate an enduring and indestructible force of which it is affirmed that it outlasts anything else. Despite the versatility of the Greek language, this term does not appear in the classics. The philosophers, who sensed the existence of this power admitted that it lay beyond the range of human reason. Well might they despair of its**

discovery by natural means for it is a product of the Holy Spirit.

The word used to render the term is "love," but it has adopted so many implications and taken on so many diverse connotations it seems ineffective. *Agape* **is not an emotion. It is not a mere expression of affection. It is the act of a will that is fully committed to the divine purpose. It is a response to a divine sharing. "We love because he first loved us." It is not a demonstration of love for that which is lovable, but for the unlovable. It is not limited to those who agree with us or who see things as we do. It embraces our enemies and those who agree with us or who see things as we do. It embraces our enemies and those who despitefully use us. But just as God's** *agape* **for an alien world, expressed in the sacrifice of Jesus, battered down walls of partition, so that same triumphant force can today overcome all barriers.**

We suggest as a fertile field for future research the nature and properties of *agape.* **Neglect of this has reduced us to the pitiable condition in which our tragic shame is exhibited to a scoffing world. A recapture of** *agape* **will again make it possible for us to conquer the world for Jesus. When Christians were regarded as on the level of beasts fit only to be slain for the entertainment of the cruel, sadistic Roman populace, it was not their doctrine nor their philosophy which melted the hearts of their captors. Those who filled the arena for the gladiatorial spectacles, and who watched without a tremor as blood ran like water, could not withstand the power of** *agape.* **"Behold how these love one another." This was the word whispered through the stands and those who saw** *agape* **demonstrated before their eyes returned home awed and shaken by the experience. That same power can again move the forces of neo-paganism in our generation![34]**

One of the last essays written by Ketcherside on the subject of spiritual fellowship was published in the February 1973 issue of *Restoration Review***. Titled simply "Fellowship." its opening**

words summarize its content:

> **My position on the fellowship we enjoy in Christ underwent a dramatic change when, in a foreign land, I traveled my personal "Damascus Road," and, taking Jesus at his word, opened the door of my inner self at his insistent knock and invited him in to commune with me. When the love of God was poured out in my heart by the Holy Spirit, and I knew that I had crossed the frontier from death unto life because I could love *all* of the brethren, I was forced to evaluate anew all that I had ever believed and taught. And today I praise his name for the wonderful deliverance from the sectarian spirit which he wrought in my unworthy life through his marvelous grace.**
>
> **Prior to that time I was in the vanguard of one of the two dozen factions into which our once glorious restoration heritage had fragmented. I equated our party with the kingdom of heaven on earth, and regarded conformity with us as faithfulness to the Lord. All of you were "brothers in error," and categorized as either sectarians or hobbyists. In our arrogance we thought of ourselves as "the faithful church," and in our narrow and bitter exclusiveness we confused fellowship with partisan recognition and acceptance, to be withdrawn in pharisaic self-righteousness when one, in deference to his conscience, could no longer acquiesce in the theological molehills elevated to spiritual mountain status, and whose tongue could no longer pronounce our shibboleth.**
>
> **When Jesus struck the sectarian shackles from my soul I came to see that the only brethren I have are "brethren in error." As Will Rogers put it, "We are all ignorant, but just about different things." All of us are caught up in the human predicament. None of us knows all there is to know. Every person among us is a sectarian to some and a hobbyist to others. There are no exceptions! A sectarian is one who has something we oppose, and a hobbyist is one who opposes something that we have. And yet no one is a liberal or conservative because of where he**

stands, but because of where we stand as we look at him.

I am ashamed of my previous littleness and bigotry. I have repented of it and claimed the forgiveness of the Father. I no longer think that I best serve him by fighting with his other children. I receive every child of God as God received me, in spite of my hangups, mistaken views and misunderstandings. So whatever may be your personal position on any of the so-called "issues" which have been hammered and pummeled into prominence, you are my brother. I love, welcome and receive you, whether you concur with my views or not. You are in the fellowship of the saints. Wherever my Father has a child there I have a brother or sister. And I regard none of you as half-brothers or stepbrothers. I have no "brothers-in-law" but only brothers in grace!

The word *koinonia*, commonly translated fellowship, is a term of majesty and magnitude. William Barclay asserts there is no single English word which can fully represent it. Literally, it means "the sharing of a common life," and the New English Version is to be commended for so rendering it. John declares that it is the sharing of eternal life, the life of God, made possible by the incarnation and manifestation of the Living Word, who came and brought his own tent with him, to share our nomadic life as foreigners and pilgrims.

When he besought the Father to give us the other Helper to abide with us through the age of his absence, fellowship became the sharing of the life of the indwelling Spirit. It is called "the fellowship of the Spirit" in Philippians 2:1 and in 2 Corinthians 13:14, where it is associated with the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God. All of these are divine gifts. Not one is a human achievement. The fellowship of the Spirit is not something men can extend or withdraw. It is a state or condition created by God which they can enjoy and in which they share through divine grace and marvelous love.

We are called into this fellowship of the Son, by

God, who is faithful (1 Corinthians 1:9). The call is issued in the Good News, the factual Message concerning the Son, which makes it possible for us to share in his life of suffering here and in the glory of his life over there (2 Thess. 2:14). The proper response to the Good News introduces us to the fellowship of the Father and Son by the power of the indwelling Spirit. And that response is made by the belief of one fact and the obedience of one act. That fact is the noblest proposition ever affirmed in a universe defiled by sin, that Jesus is the Anointed One, the Son of God. The act, validating his lordship over the whole scope of surrendered existence is immersion in water. No other creed except Christ must be confessed, no other act than baptism must be performed, in order to be translated into the fellowship of the redeemed of all ages.

It is my conviction that every sincere believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, on the face of this earth, who is immersed upon the basis of his faith, is in the fellowship of which God's precious revelation speaks. I do not receive him into the fellowship. I receive him because he is in it. And I receive him as God received me, in spite of my ignorance, shortcomings and immaturity. Fellowship is not something to be negotiated or arrived at through argument, debate or conformity to orthodoxy. It is the gift of God through a love so powerful as to be almost incomprehensible to a weak mortal like myself.

The fellowship is the vitalizing principle of the one body, and that body is not composed of sects, splinters, or segments of believers. It is constituted of individuals joined to Jesus as head, and joined to one another only because they are joined to him. Fellowship is first vertical, and then horizontal. So our unity is not based upon conventional conformity but upon covenantal community. Every saved person on earth is in that body and in the fellowship. In our present state of schism and division, no faction or movement has all of God's sheep in its partisan corral. I am in the fellowship with saints of God who never heard of Barton W. Stone or Thomas Campbell. Some of them have

never heard of Alexander Campbell and the *Christian Baptist*. They have not even heard of W. Carl Ketcherside and *Mission Messenger*.

It is a stern indictment against us that we have confused fellowship with other things and have promoted division while proclaiming unity. Fellowship is not endorsement of the views, opinions, or interpretations of another. Fellowship is a transcendent relationship to provide community. Endorsement, on the other hand, is the sanction of, or assent to the ideas expressed by another. All of us endorse some views of those with whom we are not in the fellowship; all of us are in the fellowship with some whose views we do not endorse.

The brethren in Jerusalem did not all endorse Peter's conduct at the house of Cornelius, but it was precisely because they were in the fellowship that they questioned him (Acts 11:1-8).

Paul did not endorse the judgment or opinion of Barnabas in his desire to have John Mark accompany them, but it did not affect their fellowship (Acts 15:39).

Paul did not endorse the action of Simon Peter at Antioch, but he did not sever him from the fellowship (Gal. 2:11), unless you have one of the apostles excluding another.

The scrupulous vegetarian did not endorse the act of eating meat but was forbidden to judge the one who did so, for God had received him (Romans 14:3). This shows that God receives men whose opinions, habits and actions others cannot endorse in good conscience.

The Bible teaches that individuals may live worthy of Christ and be saved even though in a congregation, the majority of whose members neither God nor themselves can endorse (Revelation 3:1-6).

Jesus said that a minority group will not be charged

with endorsement of doctrine which they do not sanction or hold, even in a congregation which tolerates it and allows it to be taught (Revelation 2:18-29).

It is silly to equate fellowship with endorsement. Not one of us who has learned anything in the last twenty years, endorses all he believed that long ago. The ghost of fellowship present (to borrow a page from Charles Dickens) would need to withdraw from the ghost of fellowship past. We would be forced to exclude ourselves retroactively, for if we could be in the fellowship twenty years ago and hold our mistaken views, others can be in the fellowship today with the same views. If not, God is a respecter of persons. To argue that fellowship is contingent upon endorsement would mean that God could not be in fellowship with any of us, unless that which is perfect can endorse that which is not.

Again, fellowship is not conditioned upon harmony, but harmony is a goal, or fruit, of fellowship. We are in the fellowship not because we are in harmony, but because we are in the fellowship we strive to attain unto harmony. Not one injunction encouraging concord as found in the apostolic letters was written to produce fellowship. Every such statement was addressed to those who were in the fellowship and because they were in it. A good example is found in Philippians 2:1, 2, where the apostle cites "the fellowship of the Spirit" as his ground for urging the saints to "fill up my cup of happiness by thinking and feeling alike, with the same love for one another, the same turn of mind, and a common care for unity."

Certainly, the congregation at Corinth lacked harmony. Paul postponed visiting them because he said, "I fear I may find quarreling and jealousy, angry tempers and personal rivalries, backbiting and gossip, arrogance and general disorder." Still, he regarded them as called saints, in the fellowship of our Lord Jesus Christ. They were God's building, God's garden, God's temple. They belonged to Christ. And it was because of this he urged,

"Mend your ways; take our appeal to heart; agree with one another; live in peace; and the God of peace will be with you. Greet one another with the kiss of peace."

But I am asked upon what grounds a congregation may dissociate itself from one who is recognized as a brother. There is no scriptural basis for one congregation excluding another congregation. No discipline can be exercised beyond the grounds of jurisdiction, without a gross usurpation of power and the exercise of tyranny. No coalition of congregations in an area can, through elected delegates or self-appointed representatives, excommunicate another congregation. All such pressure groups are spawned by the spirit of Rome and not by the Spirit of Christ. If we proclaim congregational autonomy let us also practice it!

I hold that the scriptures teach that there are only three basic reasons for delivery of one unto Satan. All three have a common root. Since fellowship is established upon a covenantal commitment, only the renunciation or repudiation of that relationship can bring about a rupture of the fellowship. The common life is entered by an acceptance of the Lordship of Jesus over our earthly existence, and it can only be disrupted by a renunciation of our pledge of allegiance to him as our sovereign.

One may deny the Lordship of Jesus in two ways—by what he does, or by what he says. If he adopts a life-style or engages in a course of conduct in defiance of the moral and ethical values associated with Jesus, he ruthlessly violates the covenantal relationship. His behavior constitutes a public and blatant declaration that he will not allow Christ to reign over him. Thus, one ground for dissociation from a brother is moral turpitude, and this is discussed at length in 1 Cor. 5.

Another basis for congregational action is the advocacy of doctrines which separate from God. One may be mistaken about many things, but erroneous opinions will not necessarily sever him from God, else God would

have no children left. The Father loves his children. He will no more cast them out because of faulty spiritual vision or inability than I would drive out a physically retarded child. And God has a lot of such children. The body of truth is like the human body, in that it has many members. Not all of these are essential to being, some are essential only to wellbeing. All truths are equally true but not all truths are equally important.

What one must believe in order to enter into the fellowship of life is more important than what one may believe while in that life. Thus, a denial of the facts related to Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God will destroy the relationship created by acceptance of those facts. Such a denial separates from God exactly as such acceptance unites with God. If one is right about Jesus, he can be wrong about a lot of things and still be saved. If he is wrong about Jesus, he can be right about everything else and still be lost. Fellowship is not conditioned upon being right about a given number of things, but upon being in the right One who was given for our sins.

The third basis for such actions as I am discussing is the factional spirit. This motivates one who is subverted and self-condemned to ignore all entreaty and admonition and to pursue a course of fragmentation of the body. To erect a "pro" or "con" party about any opinion or secondary matter, even if it is a truth, is a work of the flesh. It is a sign of deep-seated carnality and childish immaturity. Thus, the apostle says, "Avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels over the law, for they are unprofitable and futile. As for a man who is factious, after admonishing him once or twice, have nothing more to do with him." No one ever started a faction until he enticed others to sympathize with and follow him. "It is these who set up divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit" (Jude 19).

These three destructive tendencies are the only tests of union or communion for the community of the

reconciled ones. A consistent course of conduct which denies that Jesus is the source of life, advocacy of those doctrines which deny that Jesus is the foundation of life, and fragmentation of the body which expresses on earth that Jesus is the life— these constitute the sole scriptural reasons for a refusal to welcome, walk and work with our brethren.

No honest opinion arrived at from personal study of the sacred volume, and held in good conscience, can ever be made a test of fellowship without first becoming an unwritten creed. Regardless of whether one's deductions may be right or wrong about cups or classes, music or the millennium, he must be received and retained, recognized and respected. No personal experience to which he testifies, whether we regard it as valid or invalid, can be made the excuse for driving one forth from under the umbrella of our congregational love.

It is at this point we reveal the tragedy growing out of our mistaken view of the glorious fellowship of the Spirit. Although we began historically as "a project to unite the Christians among the sects," we are now one of the most schismatic religious movements on the contemporary American scene. We are divided over missionary societies, instrumental music, centralized control, colleges, orphan homes, the support of national and international radio and television programs, the right to own television sets, leavened bread, unleavened bread, the manner of breaking the bread, fermented wine, individual cups, Bible classes, uninspired literature, the work of evangelists, the pastor system, marriage of divorced persons, speaking with tongues, divine healing, the charismatic renewal movement, foot-washing, the hour of meeting to eat the Lord's Supper, and a host of other things too numerous to mention, as they say in auction bills and posters.

Not once in all of God's word is division of God's children authorized as an approach to problems within the

body. Every time division among the saints is mentioned it is condemned, and yet we could not be more divided if it were commanded of God. The fact is that we have had only one approach to differences when they arise— partisan debate, and only one solution where debate failed — division. Yet the first is discouraged and the second is condemned as contrary to the will of God.

And now, that we have splintered and fragmented ourselves until our very plea for unity makes a laughingstock of our radio broadcasts, we are told that we must thresh out every angle of every wrangle, and argue to a standstill every action of every faction, before we can ever have the satisfaction of a combined effort for our precious Lord. I deny that. And I have renounced partisan debate with any of my brethren as holding out any hope for a return to sanity of a movement madly tearing at its own flesh and consuming its own offspring.

I want to be clearly understood. I ask no one to see things as I see them. I solicit no one to work as I work. I shall love you as much if you disagree with me as if you agree. My love is not based upon your mental assent to my views but upon what Jesus did for us all. But I want to serve notice here and now that I reject our whole sectarian approach to the brotherhood of the ransomed and redeemed. My brethren are not limited to the confines of one narrow partisan corral. I am sick of the whole hypocritical partisan approach and I never intend again, so help me God, to sell my soul to any group whose price for their love must be my hatred and hostility to other brethren.

I have brethren who believe that Bible classes are wrong and other brethren who have educational wings which look like state office buildings. I have brethren who use only one container for the fruit of the vine and other brethren who use hundreds of little plastic glasses to serve the multitude. I have brethren who oppose Herald of Truth and never miss seeing it, and other brethren who

support it and never look at it. I have brethren who would never allow an electric organ on the premises even for a wedding, and others who play on one every time they assemble to sing God's praise. But not a one of these has anything to do with the fellowship which is in Christ Jesus!

All of these I have mentioned are my brothers and I love them all. I do not agree with them upon everything they think, say or do. Certainly I cannot condone or endorse that with which I do not agree. But they are not answerable to me. They are answerable to the same Father who will also judge me. And I shall never again set at nought a brother for whom Christ died, over such matters. I will allow him to stand or fall to his own Master. I will not play God with the lives and thoughts of God's other children.

It is not easy to take the road of love for all of the brethren. It is the most difficult thing I ever sought to do. It makes you vulnerable, naked in spirit and open to attack. But I am committed to trudging this road into the sunset glow because it is the one which He asked me to walk. If it means crucifixion at the hands of those whom I love, the cross is not too great a price to pay for the crown.

What does this mean spelled out in terms of our practical problems of today? It means that the brethren who labor, teach and study at Abilene Christian College are my brethren. It also means that those who are associated with Florida College occupy the same spot in my heart. But it also means that the brethren at Cincinnati Bible Seminary and Ozark Bible College are just as much my brethren. I love them all. They are all God's children. They are all members of the royal family. I will go among them all, sharing with them my concepts as they will allow, and when they will not allow, then listening to them that I may learn and grow in knowledge as well as grace.

It means that Pat Boone is my brother and Shirley Boone is my sister. Whether the personal experience to which they testify is the work of the Spirit as they interpret

it, or an emotional and psychological projection, as others interpret it, has not one thing to do with fellowship in Christ Jesus our Lord. I have all my life put up with people who had difficulty with English, and I am not about to run someone off who says he can speak something else. My real trouble is not with brethren who claim to speak in tongues and don't know what they are saying. It is with those who claim to speak English and I don't know what they are saying!

The brethren who produce and propagandize the Herald of Truth programs are my brethren. The brethren who take to the air waves and support radio programs to attack their means of support are my brethren. The brethren who would not allow a television set on the place, and have to go over to a neighbor's place to watch the election returns, are my brethren. If I have to wait until everyone is consistent before I can have a brother, I will never have one, and if they all become consistent, they might exclude me.

So I propose to allow my brethren to go their way, blasting and bombarding one another as antis and liberals, but I will receive them all as long as they seek to cleave to Jesus as their prophet, priest and king. And I think all of them earnestly seek this. I no longer carry a pocket-full of labels and tags. And I have resolved never again to be boxed up in a neat factional package as a public display of loyalty. Pigeon-holing is for the birds!

Centuries before our Lord made this "the visited planet," God used the tongue of a herd man from Tekoa to thunder his wrath upon the people of Tyre because they "remembered not the brotherly covenant." Will the divine censure poured out upon a people who once united to erect an earthly temple, be less severe upon those who were incorporated as living stones in a spiritual temple, and who have trampled under their factional feet the covenant of brotherhood? Will we be forgiven if we take the keen sword handed us to vanquish a malevolent foe, and bathe

it in the warm spiritual gore of God's other children?

I know not what course others may take, but I am resolved to ignore the cold and cruel fences and barriers our fathers erected to separate and segregate members of the divine family. I refuse to perpetuate the senseless feuds which originated in passion and have been kept inflamed by the tongues of bitterness and haughty pride. The dynamic of love has transformed into glowing transparency those walls which previously were opaque and I can now see my brethren on both sides of them. Praise God for such wonderful love— love which can melt hearts of stone— love which can span the frightful chasms eroded by hostility and bitterness.

Regardless of your personal feeling toward me, regardless of our divergent views, you are my brethren. All of you. We are in the fellowship of the divine. And I have been blessed above measure by a recognition of this wider, broader, and greater fellowship which makes possible soul-expansion in the pure atmosphere of the abundant life. I have learned the meaning of the poetic words:

He drew a circle and shut me out,

Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout;

But love and I had the wit to win,

We drew a circle, and took him in.[35]

For Additional Study

The following is a list of articles by W. Carl Ketcherside that discuss the topic of the current chapter in greater detail. All of Ketcherside's essays are available in volumes 1 and 3 of the *e-book* series *The Works of W. Carl Ketcherside*, accessible on Amazon.com and archive.org.

- **"Agape: Foundation of Christian Fellowship."** *Restoration Review* **2 (February 1963): 45.**
- **"The Ground of Christian Fellowship."** *Restoration Review* **3 (March 1963): 70.**
- **"Walking in the Light."** *Mission Messenger* **(May 1965): 65.**
- **"Fellowship."** *Restoration Review* **2 (February 1973): 22.**
- **"The Scotch Influence."** *Mission Messenger* **(January 1974): 10.**
- **"The Longest Prayer."** *Mission Messenger* **(January 1975): 1.**
- **"The Common Life."** *Mission Messenger* **(February 1975): 17.**
- **"The Sharing of Life."** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1975): 33.**
- **"Confusion of Tongues."** *Ensign* **10 (February 1978): 5.**

Chapter 10

UNITY IN DIVERSITY

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Introduction

> **Yet it is by this means alone we can secure that *unity in diversity* from which harmony and happiness result.—Robert Richardson[1]**

Of the various concepts associated with Carl Ketcherside, *unity in diversity* may be the most common. Although the idea that Christians may be united while differing in their doctrinal deductions was central to Thomas Campbell's *Declaration and Address*, the passing of two centuries since its introduction has led modern heirs of the movement to a complete reversal of outlook.

Unity in diversity came to be synonymous with Ketcherside "liberalism" within Churches of Christ because it implied what their leaders believed to be impossibile— that Christians could be united while disagreeing in their doctrinal views. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, *unity in conformity* had been the prevailing approach to unity among these churches.

Because of his insistence that the only kind of unity possible is a unity in diversity, it was widely rumored that Ketcherside taught that the content of one's beliefs was inconsequential— that you could be a Christian while believing whatever you wanted to. Of course, such hearsay could only be credible among those who were entirely unfamiliar with his writings.

Before exploring Ketcherside's views on visible unity, it will be helpful to first understand three foundational concepts upon which his thinking rests: (1) the impossibility of unity in conformity, (2) the inalienable right of every believer to private judgment regarding the meaning of scripture, and (3) an understanding of the difference between matters of faith and matters of opinion.

The Impossibility of Unity in Conformity

That identical understanding of scripture by all members of the body of Christ is an impossibility should be self-evident. If such "unity in conformity" or "unity in doctrine" implied such an idea, no one could possibly take it seriously, since such uniformity of thinking is nowhere found in society. People are too diverse in age, intellectual ability, and academic training to be expected to think alike.

When modern heirs of the Restoration Movement talk about being united in doctrine, they are referring only to *specific doctrines*— usually fewer than ten— which they consider non-negotiable for continued membership in their group. While certain core doctrines characterize almost all of these churches, there are additional non-negotiable doctrines which vary depending on the group to which one belongs. If one is not known to disagree with those doctrinal conclusions, he is accepted as part of the group. What members believe about other teachings of the new covenant scriptures is of no consequence, so long as those beliefs do not conflict with the non-negotiable doctrines about which unanimous assent is assumed and required.

The Right to Private Judgment

Since the time of the Protestant Reformation, in 1517, the right of every believer to interpret the Bible according to conscience has been assumed. However, when doctrinal purity is regarded as an indicator of spiritual fidelity, the right of private judgment is inevitably compromised. People cannot be allowed to think for themselves if they are required to think in a prescribed manner.

What cannot be ignored is that the concept of required "doctrinal purity," or orthodoxy, and the concept that each believer is entitled to interpret scripture according to conscience are in irreconcilable conflict. They simply cannot be

harmonized. Any attempt to impose orthodoxy is an attempt to enslave the mind. But men cannot be forced to believe that which they cannot honestly see to be true. While they may be coerced to confess a doctrinal view, they can never be forced to believe it to be true— unless they become convinced that it is so.

The Difference Between Faith and Opinion

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, the distinction between *matters of faith* **and** *matters of opinion* **has been so obscured that the terms have become impractical in discussions about the unity of believers. A matter of faith has been loosely redefined to mean "whatever the Bible requires." In contrast, a matter of opinion has been redefined to mean "a matter of indifference"— one in which God's will has not been revealed and is therefore left to human judgment. In practice, however, whether a thing is to be considered a matter of faith or a matter of opinion is ultimately a** *matter of interpretation.*

Interpretation, however, requires a philosophy or method of interpretation with which to understand the meaning of the text, as well as its practical applicability. When the Bible is viewed as a legal document, people tend to approach its interpretation as either strict constructionists or loose constructionists. These differences result in a diversity of conclusions as to its meaning and its application.

A Presumed Dilemma

Modern heirs of the restoration movement presume themselves to be under contradictory scriptural injunctions. On the one hand, they *affirm* **that the scriptures command them to be united. On the other, they** *assume* **that the apostolic epistles contain instructions that require them to disobey that command. They believe themselves to be faced with the dilemma of being**

bound by scripture to be united, **yet** *bound by scripture to divide* **the body whenever they cannot agree upon the meaning of certain apostolic writings. Such a contradiction, however, cannot be attributed to God's revelation. To do so would be to accuse God of commanding the very thing he prohibits.**

This seeming dilemma is, of course, of our own creation and is of recent origin. Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, the Restoration Movement knew nothing of *doctrinal conformity* **as a condition for fellowship. Such did not come about until 1889, when the doctrinal deductions of a** *few* **were imposed upon** *all***— elevated them to the level of scripture and required, under threat of excommunication, to be accepted. It was to this point in the movement's history that Ketcherside repeatedly insisted that modern heirs must return to correct the extravagances of their forebears.**

Historical Development

Pursuant to my thesis that Carl Ketcherside's writings largely reflect the thinking of the founders of the Restoration Movement, I have presented below the thoughts of several of the pioneers regarding the visible unity of believers. However, while agreement with early Restoration thinking does not assure agreement with scripture, the founders proposed these principles precisely because they believed them to be grounded in scripture. That, however, is for the reader to decide.

Since the early writings of the movement have largely been unavailable except to those with access to large academic libraries, I have provided extensive excerpts to facilitate a comparison of the thinking of the fathers with that the heirs of the movement— particularly that of Carl Ketcherside. The length of many of the quotations is intended to provide context for key statements from which conclusions are drawn.

Evidence from Barton W. Stone

In an untitled essay, one of the earliest reformers of the movement, Barton W. Stone, makes clear that the position of the reformers is grounded in the text of scripture, rejecting all human opinions or doctrinal deductions required for fellowship — such as those set forth in creeds:

> **Our principles are known to the world— that we have taken the Bible alone for our faith, to the rejection of all human creeds— that we have rejected every party name for Christian, which we alone will wear with consent — that we will unite in fellowship with all holy, obedient believers in Jesus, without regard to their opinions.[2]**

Among suggestions on becoming "more useful in the vineyard," written to a brother who aspired to become a preacher of the gospel, Stone wrote:

> **Be careful not to wound the feelings of the least Christian of any name. View all the children of God as your brethren, whatever name they may bear. What if they have received wrong opinions of truth? This is no reason why you should despise or reject them. Consider the best method of correcting those errors. It is not angrily or dogmatically to declaim against them. Such a course never did convince any of his errors. The correct course is to establish the truth by sound argument, and then in meekness to instruct opposers by answering their objections fairly stated.[3]**

The obvious hurdle facing those who advocate unity by through doctrinal uniformity is the human limitation that prevents them from knowing anything as they ought. It is this limitation to which Stone refers in the following excerpt:

> **My dear bro: zeal for a favorite sentiment, has carried many beyond the boundaries of truth, charity and forbearance. I have known many so zealous for trinity,**

> **that they have esteemed it the sum of all truth, and considered all as destitute of faith, who did not receive it. I have seen others who seemed to view the opposite doctrine, as the very touchstone of truth, and viewed all who denied it, as unbelievers in the way to hell. I have equal certainty with you, that we are bound to believe every thing God has revealed. But where is the man that can say, he understands infallibly every thing God has revealed; the Pope of Rome excepted? If all may err, is there not a possibility that my brother may have erred also?[4]**

In the same issue of his journal, Stone expressed reservations about whether the pious unimmersed should be excluded from the kingdom of God. In a response to an article by Alexander Campbell in the *Harbinger*, he writes:

> **We beseech all our brethren, to search the scriptures with honesty. O! think not that we have the knowledge of all truth, and need no more. Never close your ears to any thing, because it is different from your views. This has been the ruin of every reformation since the apostacy. Of this we were apprised, when we left all for the truth's sake. We determined then, to lay open to conviction, and learn the truth, and receive every ray of divine light coming from the book of God. Let us beware of a departure from this principle. Let us think, and let our brethren think—Let all be free. On facts, not opinions, should our faith be fixt; and for disobedience and not for opinions, should we reject any called a *brother*. Let us not for mere opinions contend with, and reject one another.[5]**

In the fall of the following year, Stone exhorted his readers to beware of schemes of union upon the Bible that are devoid of the spirit of the book. In the final analysis, he contends that what will unfailingly bind our hearts together in unity is that love of God, shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit:

> **I have long thought, and seriously thought, whether a formal union on the Bible, without possessing the spirit of that book, would be a blessing or a curse to society—**

> **whether it would be better than faith without works, or than a body without the Spirit— whether it would not rather be a stumbling block, a delusive snare to the world. O, my brethren, let us repent and do our first works— let us seek for more holiness, rather than trouble ourselves and others with schemes and plans of union. The love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us, will more effectually unite, than all the wisdom of the world combined.[6]**

Some thirteen years later, Stone commended Robert Richardson for an article in the *Harbinger* on the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer. He then follows with these remarks:

> **It is for the want of this doctrine preached, and received in the love of it, that Christendom has at this day, and for centuries back, but the shadow of Christianity— without the spirit, without Christ in us— salt without savor— moon-light without heat or warmth. It is for the want of this, and the experience of its truth, that we are all divided into contending sects, in hostile array against each other, and forever wrangling about our diversity of opinions.**
>
> **Had all professors of christianity the experimental knowledge of this truth, they would then understand the religion of the Lord Jesus; . . .[7]**

In what now seems prophetic, Stone continues his commendation of Richardson's essay:

> **I view the doctrine you advocate the very kernel of religion— without it all is vain. In vain we boast the ancient order of things, while we lack the spring. Our reformation will dwindle into sectarianism, unless timely prevented. I fear, its incipient stages are visible.[8]**

Evidence from Thomas Campbell

In previous essays, much has been excerpted from Thomas Campbell regarding the basis of both the spiritual and visible unity of believers. The quotation below is typical of his views. In it, questions the probability of people of different ages and varying levels of formal education attaining a "unity of sentiment," or an identical understanding of scripture— even supposing such a goal to be desirable:

> **But further, with respect to unity of sentiment, even suppose it ever so desirable, it appears highly questionable, whether such a thing can at all be secured, by any expedient whatsoever; especially if we consider, that it necessarily pre-supposes in so far, a unity or sameness of understanding.**
>
> **Or, will any say, that, from the youth of seventeen to the man of fourscore— from the illiterate peasant, up to the learned prelate; all the legitimate members of the church entertain the same sentiments under their respective formulas? If not, it is still but a mere verbal agreement, a mere shew of unity. They say an amen to the same forms of speech, or of sound words, as they are called; without having, at the same time, the same views of the subject; or, it may be, without any determinate views of it at all.**
>
> **And what is still worse, this profession is palmed upon the world, as well as upon the too credulous professors themselves, for unity of sentiment; for soundness in the faith: when, in a thousand instances, they have, properly speaking, no faith at all: that is to say, if faith necessarily pre-supposes a true and satisfactory conviction of the scriptural evidence and certainty of the truth of the propositions we profess to believe.**
>
> **A cheap and easy orthodoxy this, to which we may attain by committing to memory a catechism; or professing our approbation of a formula, made ready to our hand; which we may, or may not have once read over; or even if we have, yet may not have been able to read it so**

correctly and intelligently, as to clearly understand one single paragraph from beginning to end; much less to compare it with, to search and try it by, the holy Scriptures; to see if these things be so.

A cheap and easy orthodoxy this, indeed, to which a person may thus attain, without so much as turning over a single leaf of his Bible; whereas Christ knew no other way of leading us to the knowledge of himself, at least has prescribed no other, but by searching the Scriptures, with reliance upon his holy Spirit. [9]

Evidence from Alexander Campbell

In 1824, the two churches associated with Walter Scott and Sidney Rigdon united as one congregation. Those who strongly opposed that union also opposed Alexander Campbell's teaching in the *Christian Baptist***— which had just completed its first year of publication.**

Shortly before departing for an extended tour of Kentucky in September 1824— during which time he met Barton W. Stone and conversed with John Smith for the first time— Campbell addressed an essay to Lawrence Greatrake, who had earlier published a pamphlet titled *Letters to Alexander Campbell, by a Regular Baptist***. In his** *Letters* **Greatrake writes:**

Again, we know that you propagate the doctrine of the church's independency, so far as to exclude all reference to articles of faith and principles of order upon which they have been founded, . . . And really, sir, your attempt to disseminate this sort of sentiment . . . demonstrates your very great attainment in impudence, or that you are extremely ignorant of the constituents of social unity and order.[10]

He goes on to accuse Campbell of having attempted to "destroy the very foundation upon which the [Baptist]

denomination has risen to such imposing magnitude."[11] In response, Campbell points out:

> **And there is one fact which all my Baptist friends in this country know, that when the church to which I belonged associated with them, we protested against all creeds of human composition as terms of communion; at the same time declaring what we believed to be Christian truth in opposition to reigning errors. And although some seem to think there is no difference between a verbal or written declaration of faith and recognizing a human creed as a term of communion, we see a very great difference, so much at least as to forbid an effort on our part to make our own declaration of faith a term of communion to others.[12]**

In this statement, Campbell draws attention to the difference in a statement of belief— whether written or otherwise— and a creed. A statement of belief becomes a creed *only* when it is made a condition for fellowship. Regarding creeds— that is, the doctrinal interpretations they contain— as the source of division, Campbell goes on to affirm:

> **They make an assent to *philosophical views of revelation a bond of union*, and consequently every new discovery, or dissent from an ancient one, occasions a new heresy and a new sect. Exclude him; for "how can two walk together unless they are agreed," says the orthodox.[13]**

In the spring of 1825, Alexander Campbell published the second installment of his series on "A Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things," in which he states that creeds are merely human speculation on the meaning of scripture. They consist of "inferences drawn by the human understanding" which "partake of all the defects of that understanding." Such defects produce the spectacle of two sincere believers drawing inferences from the same passage of scripture that are not only different, but contradictory. Campbell then observes:

> **This is the result of a variety of circumstances. The prejudices of education, habits of thinking, modes of reasoning, different degrees of information, the influence of a variety of passions and interests, and, above all, the different degrees of strength of human intellect, all concur in producing this result. The persons themselves are very often unconscious of the operation of all these circumstances, and are, therefore, honestly and sincerely zealous in believing and in maintaining the truth of their respective conclusions.**[14]

As a result of such disparities in human circumstances, Campbell maintains that conclusions regarding the interpretation of the epistles addressed to believers should never be placed on a level of authority equal to that of scripture. Furthermore, such conclusions should always be held as private property, and never imposed upon others as tests of union or communion. He writes:

> **These conclusions, then, are always private property, and can never be placed upon a level with the inspired word. Subscription to them, or an acknowledgement of them, can never be rationally required as a bond of union. If, indeed, all christians were alike in all those circumstantial differences already mentioned, then an accordance in all the conclusions which one or more of them might draw from the divine volume, might rationally be expected from them all. But as Christians have never yet all possessed the same prejudices, degrees of information, passions, interests, modes of thinking and reasoning, and the same strength of understanding, an attempt to associate them under the banners of a human creed composed of human inferences, and requiring unanimity in the adoption of it, is every way as irrational as to make a uniformity of features, of color, of height and weight, a bond of union. A society of this kind never yet existed, and we may, I think, safely affirm never will.**[15]

In early 1826, in an essay dealing with forbearance, Campbell explains that, as used in scripture, the word implies a refusal to take offence. Consequently, using the word in reference to differences of opinion implies that one has the right to be offended by another whose doctrinal deductions differ from his own— a notion that Campbell rejects. However, he adds a notable disclaimer:

> **I know that we all use the term forbearance in a very unwarrantable sense, and that it is difficult to find a term every way appropriate to communicate correct ideas on this subject. To bear with, or allow a brother to exercise his own judgment, is no doubt all that you intend by the term, and this is certainly inculcated in the apostolic writings. And I am willing to carry this principle to its greatest possible extent; though, as you say, there is and must be a stopping place. So long as any man, woman, or child, declares his confidence in Jesus of Nazareth as God's own Son, that he was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification; or, in other words, that Jesus is the Messiah, the Saviour of men; and so long as he exhibits a willingness to obey him in all things according to his knowledge, so long will I receive him as a Christian brother and treat him as such.** [16]

On one occasion, a reader of the *Harbinger* wrote to Alexander Campbell, signing his letter as "An Independent Baptist." The reader questions how Campbell can be regarded as a restorer of primitive Christianity in light of his commitment to remain with the Baptists. He further asserts that Campbell's claim to be in full communion with the Mahoning Baptist Association— and thus, with the whole Baptist society— is inconsistent with what he had written in the *Christian Baptist*.

Campbell responds by pointing to the principles of union and communion which he had previously advocated— the only foundation upon which Christians can unite and have full communion. He then explains:

> **And what is it but a sincere and hearty conviction, expressed or confessed by the lips,** *that Jesus is the Christ***: and this belief, exhibited by an overt act of obedience which implies that the subject has put on Christ, prepares him, or qualifies him, if you please, to be saluted as a brother. So long as he confesses with his lips that he believes in his heart this truth, and lives conformably to it and supports an unblemished moral character, so long he is a worthy brother.**[17]

As he continues, Campbell points out that none of the primitive congregations were united in their doctrinal deductions. In fact, not one of them may be considered a perfect model of New Testament Christianity. He further explains that his sharing with Baptists in a specific act should not be regarded as an expression of "full communion" with them or an endorsement of everything they believe. In fact, if such participation were to be taken as a complete approbation of all their views and practices, he would refuse to participate.

> **But that congregations may be found, under the banners of this profession, with whom I would not unite in one single act of social worship, as well as individuals, I will cheerfully declare. And with not one would I unite in prayer, or praise, or breaking bread,** *if that act is to be interpreted into a full, perfect, and entire approbation of all their views, doctrine, and practice,* **as a society or individuals. Here then is the fundamental difference between your full communion and mine. Every act of the one, you understand, as unequivocally expressing full and entire approbation of everything among them. I consider every act as only expressing approbation of the thing represented, and of them in so far as they conform to it. Therefore, I frankly and boldly declare to them, as Paul did to the Corinthians, the things in which I praise them, and the things in which I praise them not. And I know of no way, of no course, that any Christian can pursue consistently with the whole New Testament, consistently with his serving God and his own generation, but this one.**

Therefore I advocate it and practise it.[18]

Of his own perfectionism, Campbell writes:

> **I have tried the pharisaic plan, the monastic. I was once so straight, that, like the Indian's tree, I leaned a little the other way. . . . for I was once so strict a Separatist that I would neither pray nor sing praises with any one who was not as perfect as I supposed myself. In this most unpopular course I persisted until I discovered the mistake, and saw that on the principle embraced in my conduct, there never could be a congregation or church upon the earth.**[19]

Regarding the misconception that we are the only true church, Campbell urges with remarkable acuity:

> **To lock ourselves up in the bandbox of our own little circle; to associate with a few units, tens, or hundreds, as the pure church, as the elect, is real Protestant monkery, it is evangelical nunnery.**[20]

To this he adds, as if foreseeing the future:

> **If we would heal the sick, we must visit them; if we would restore the lame, we must take them by the hand; if we would correct, inform, or reform erring Christians, we must do as the Saviour did;— bear with their weaknesses. We must seek every opportunity of converting the sinner from the error of his way, of instructing the weak and feeble-minded. It is lame charity which requires all its objects to be as rich, as wise, and as strong as ourselves. And the history of the world does not afford one instance of any man, or set of men, reforming, or restoring, or enlightening, or comforting the society from which they separated. And the systems and sects which they built, in the lapse of a few years, were as much in need of reformation, as those from which their founders separated.**[21]

Precisely two years later, Campbell writes:

> **When men make communion in religious worship dependent on uniformity of opinion, they make self-love, instead of the love of God, the bond of union, and elevate matters of mere speculation above the one faith, the one Lord, and the one immersion. . . . We are happy, indeed, in discovering in some of them a decided triumph over the narrow and illiberal principles which make a disagreement in what are called "doctrinal points," dismember a church, or exclude, as unsound in the faith, the man whose head is too strong, or too weak, to assent to some far-fetched deductions of a more abstract or metaphysical reasoner.**[22]

Since division among Christians is stems from their inability to agree on their opinions or doctrinal interpretations, it has been hypothetically proposed that men simply renounce their opinions to achieve visible unity. But someone objects: "But men cannot give up their opinions, and, therefore, they never can unite." To this, Campbell replies:

> *We do not ask them to give up their opinions*— **We ask them** *only not to impose them upon others*. **Let them hold their opinions; but let them hold them as private property. The faith is public property: opinions are, and always have been, private property. . . .**[23]

Later, in the same article, Campbell recalls a meeting of the Mahoning Association in 1828, where Thomas Campbell refused to reject Aylett Raines from the fellowship of the disciples despite Raines's Universalist beliefs. Raines had earlier pledged to hold his views as a matter of private opinion and not to press them as a condition for fellowship with others. At the time, Alexander Campbell observed that if Raines's convictions were "not agitated nor discussed, the ancient gospel would cause them to wither away." Campbell then includes a letter from Raines in which he states that his former views had been "slowly and imperceptibly erased" from his mind. To this Campbell reacts:

> **If I were to attempt to produce the greatest uniformity of opinion, I would set about it by paying no respect to opinions, laying no emphasis upon them, admiring and contemning no opinion as such. But if I wished to produce the greatest discrepancies in opinion, I would call some damnably dangerous, others of vital importance; I would always eulogize the sound, and censure the erroneous in opinions. We all know that strife is like the bursting forth of water— it always widens the channels; and many a broil in churches, neighborhoods, and families, would have been prevented if the first indication had been sympathetically attributed to the infirmity of human nature.**[24]

In the above statements, Campbell acknowledges doctrinal differences as the cause of division. His proposal, however, is that such differences can do no harm if they are simply ignored — so long as they are not imposed upon others as tests of union and communion. Aylett Raines serves as a case in point.

In response to a letter from R. T. Brown of Rush County, Indiana, who had been excommunicated by a church for "the heresies of Campbellism," Campbell denies that uniformity of doctrinal agreement may serve as a basis of unity among believers. He further challenges those who propose that unity be based on conformity of this type that they specify the number of doctrines— whether ten or ten thousand— that shall be required. He opens his remarks as follows:

> **What meaneth this intolerant spirit? I ask again, What is the meaning of it? Is every man who acknowledges in word and deed the supreme authority of Jesus of Nazareth as Lord Messiah— who has vowed allegiance to him— who is of good report as respects good works, to be sacrificed upon the altar of opinion— because his opinion upon some speculation, fact, or doctrine, differs from mine? Because, while he admits that *Jesus died for our sins*, he will not dogmatize upon the nature, extent and every attribute of "*the atonement*"— is he to be**

deemed unfit for the kingdom of heaven? Admitting "*an election of favor***," is he to be given over to** *Satan* **because of some opinion about the conditionality or unconditionality of that election? In one word, are we to understand that an exact agreement in opinion, a perfect uniformity is contended for as a bond of union? If so, let our Baptist brethren say so. Let them declare to the world, that**

"*Tenth, or ten thousandth, breaks* **the** *chain alike***;"**

That a disagreement in the tenth opinion, or in the ten thousandth opinion, breaks the bond of union. If this be the decree, let it be published and translated into all languages— let it be known and read of all men. If, again, a perfect uniformity be not decreed, but a partial uniformity, let it be proclaimed in how many opinions and agreement must be obtained; then we shall know who are, and who are not, to be treated as heathen men and publicans.[25]

Campbell continues his objection to making doctrinal differences a legitimate cause for division among brethren:

Who makes divisions now? The man who sets up his private judgments as the standard of truth, and compels submission to them; or the man who will bear with a brother who thinks in some things differently from him?

No man can, with either reason or fact on his side, accuse me of making divisions among christians. I declare non-fellowship with no man who owns the Lord in word and deed. Such is a christian. He that denies the Lord in word or deed is not a christian. A Jew or a Gentile he may be, a Pharisee or a Sadducee he may be, but a *christian* **he cannot be! If a man confess the Lord Jesus, or acknowledge him as the only Saviour sent of God; if he vow allegiance to him, and submit to his government, I will recognize him as a christian and treat him as such. If a man cause divisions and offences by setting up his own decisions, his private judgment, we must consider him as a**

> **factionist, and as such he must be excluded— *not* for his difference in opinions, but because he makes his opinion an idol, and demands homage to it. . . . When we shall have cut off from the church any person or persons because of a difference of opinion, then they may say, with reason, we cause divisions. Till then it is gratuitous.[26]**

In the fourth of a series of letters to William Jones, publisher of *The Millennial Harbinger and Voluntary Church Advocate* (1935–36),[27] Campbell observes that if unity of doctrine were a desirable goal, experience has shown that insisting on such unity would only result in a proliferation of diverse views:

> **If, however, unity of opinion were desirable, to attain it, we must give the greatest liberty of opinion; for though once theory with us, it is now matter of experience, that the more stress is laid upon unity of opinion, the less of it, and the more division; and the less regard paid to it, the less emphasis laid upon it, the more we will have of it. This is founded in a law of the human mind, on which it is unseasonable and unnecessary to expatiate.[28]**

To this observation he adds the following:

> **We have good reason to say, that there exists not the same number of professors in any department of Christendom amongst whom unity of opinion as much as unity of faith is the bond of union, so much of one opinion in all matters pertaining to Christian institution, as amongst the brethren who have agreed cordially "to receive one another without regard to differences of opinion." They have not laid so much stress upon it, and therefore they have the more of it.[29]**

Here Campbell observes that experience has shown that reformers whose bond of union *does not require* uniformity of doctrine, actually achieve it to a *greater* degree than those whose bond of union *requires* it. In other words, there is *less* unity of doctrine among those who practice unity in conformity than

among those who practice unity in diversity— or, the more uniformity of doctrine is required, the less it is achieved.

Campbell again notes that diversity of age, natural gifts, levels of formal education, and general circumstances present an obstacle to achieving unity upon the basis of a uniform understanding of doctrine:

> **Amongst christians there is now, as there was at the beginning, a very great diversity in the knowledge of the christian institution. There are babes, children, young men, and fathers in Christ now, as well as in the days of the Apostle John. This, from the natural gifts of God, from the diversities of age, education, and circumstances, is unavoidable. And would it not be just as rational and as scriptural to excommunicate one another, because our knowledge is less or greater than any fixed measure, as for differences of opinion or matters of speculation?[30]**

Evidence from Robert Richardson

Perhaps none of the early writers of the Restoration Movement expressed himself quite as clearly on the matter of doctrinal diversity as Robert Richardson. In the sixth installment of his 1848 series of essays on "Reformation," Richardson first observes that by including "opinions" in their formularies of belief, Protestant sects are guilty of two grave errors. First, they violate the right to private judgment by including matters that are "not essential to a saving faith"— that is, doctrinal interpretations, that are not part of the gospel. Secondly, "they violate the great truth that there should be one evangelical or gospel faith." He further observes that the religious world "would appear to have been, until recently, ignorant of the truth, that men never will agree except in generals." He then summarizes:

> **It is to these departures from the two great truths of**

> Protestantism, which, in their just relations with each other, can alone secure unity, by reconciling law with liberty, and faith with opinion, that we may refer the discord and dissension that have prevailed.[31]

Regarding the religious world, Richardson goes on to explain that any attempt to achieve conformity or perfect agreement in doctrinal understanding is futile:

> Each party has been constantly seeking to induce an exact conformity to the minute peculiarities of its own creed, and no one has been willing to regard these as secondary to the great truths of Christianity. But it is a vain attempt, as experience has fully shown, to endeavor to effect a perfect agreement among men in matters of opinion, or even in those minutiae of Christian doctrine with which reason has often as much to do as faith.
>
> There may be unity in regard to the simple gospel facts; to the grand fundamental truth of Christianity; to the divinely appointed means of salvation; to the one great object of worship; to the one source of spiritual light and truth; to the one cementing principle of mutual love which pervades and animates the body of Christ.[32]

Even if such uniformity could be achieved, Richardson exclaims, how undesirable it would be! Even nature itself finds its source of beauty and delight in its "infinite diversity." In fact, such beauty depends on those "endless diversities" for its very existence.

> As well might we desire to have but a single note in music, as one opinion in religion. As well might we desire to see the whole earth, and the heavens, clothed in drab, as to have every one to conform to the sentiments of any single party in Christendom. Where would be, then, the free comparison of sentiment, and the delightful interchange of thought? Where the charm of new discovery, and the progressive enlargement of mind? Where the doubt, that, betraying the weakness of human

judgment, represses intellectual pride; and where the mutual forbearance which strengthens mutual love? He who has ordained that no two human faces shall be perfectly alike, and that their features shall yet agree in general character, has also instituted that diversity of mind which admits, in the same manner, of an essential unity. These differences must in both cases be permitted; for we might as well try to make all faces alike, as all minds alike.[33]

Although an advocate for the right of private judgment, Richardson is careful to point out that the word "opinion" is often used in a confused and improper sense, compromising or undervaluing the true faith of the gospel. In this regard he notes:

> **It is just as necessary that we should have an immoveable basis of thought, as that we should have liberty to think. It is as essential to unity that there should be a universal faith, as it is to diversity that there should be an individual opinion. The other great truth is, therefore, that the Christian community should be united together by a common belief, which shall fully embrace the gospel, and secure a just conformity to the divine will.**
>
> **To adopt this truth alone, and prescribe a formula of faith to men, while interdicting at the same time all liberty of thought, would be regarded as arbitrary dictation. To admit, on the other hand, an unlimited freedom in matters of religion, would be latitudinarianism. It is a nice matter to adjust the relations of these two opposite principles, so that liberty shall be consistent with law, and a just latitude of opinion compatible with an unwavering faith.** *Yet it is by this means alone we can secure that unity in diversity from which harmony and happiness result*.[34]

It is here we find what appears to be the first— and only— use of the phrase "unity in diversity" in the writings of the pioneers

of the movement, although the practice is advocated throughout.

Continuing his discussion, Richardson notes that while mankind delights in freedom of thought, such freedom, when unchecked, becomes unbearable. Under such circumstances, "the very necessities of his nature speedily demand that lawless license shall give place to lawful liberty." In other words,

> **. . . voluntary subjection to fixed principles is by far the most powerful of them all. . . . Settled and fixed principles are the true home of Freedom. It is License alone that spurns the just restraints of law, and becomes a criminal, and a vagabond in the earth. . . . it is by law alone that liberty can be granted. And in proportion to the excellency of the law, will be that of the liberty it confers. Hence it is, that under the law of Love, devoted service is perfect freedom, and that, in the belief and voluntary obedience of the gospel alone, man can receive that emancipation of soul; that enlargement of thought, that make him free indeed.**[35]

Knowing the need of the human mind to find a sure and steadfast anchor— to find relief from the torture of uncertainty — God gave man the gospel, "the very security he requires." In this regard Richardson remarks:

> **Surely, there can be nothing less indeterminate than the gospel of Christ; nothing less transitory than the word of God "which lives and abides for ever:" nothing less unstable than the Christian confession.— the great central truth of Christianity— that rock on which Jesus declared he would build his church, and against which he promised that the gates of Hades should not prevail! The solemn sanctions, even, which are thrown around the gospel, indicate its character and its importance. It becomes the savor of death, as well as that of life. "he that believeth not shall be condemned."**
>
> **Shall guilt attach to the disbelief of any thing that is doubtful? "Vengeance" shall be taken upon those who**

> **"obey not the gospel." Shall the Judge of all the earth condemn for disobedience if the import of the command may be lawfully disputed? Most assuredly, the divine truth upon which God has made to rest not merely the hopes of life, but the fears of everlasting death, is unchangeably certain, unmistakably evident, and indubitably credible.**[36]

Richardson acknowledges the zeal of the Protestant reformers for the right of private judgment in interpreting scripture, as well as the offsetting need for "fixed principles of action." To meet that need, they sought to provide an orderly explanation of the teaching of scripture— to replace the infallible pronouncements of the Pope. Unfortunately, Richardson notes, they were misguided:

> **In some respects, however, they unfortunately** *confounded the infallibility of the scriptures with the fallibility of their own understandings*; **and dogmatically affirmed doctrines to be true, because they appeared to them to be so. And, still more unfortunately, they were led by zeal for purity of doctrine, to transcend the just limits of the Christian faith, and not only to give to various minute particulars in divine revelation itself an unnecessary conspicuity, but to add, as of equal authority, the deductions of their own minds. Granting, in theory, the right of private judgment, and insisting upon it as the very ground of their own revolt against the Pope, they, at the same time, delivered to their followers systems of religious belief, in which they have gone so much into detail, as to touch upon almost every subject of religious knowledge; embrace almost every speculative opinion; and decide** *ex-cathedra* **almost every possible question. Hence it is, that, under these creeds and confessions, a man cannot think for himself at all without becoming a heretic, and** *the right of individual judgment exists in name alone***. Instead of the simple facts, and general truths propounded as the subject matter of faith in the word of God, they have delivered philosophic theories, and special tenets.**[37]

The Protestant reformers substituted doctrines for actions and opinion for faith. They turned the gospel's haven of rest into a creed, which Richardson describes as "a dry-dock in which the vessel is immovably fixed to undergo repairs forever." He adds, "That which was intended by the Divine Architect as a free and happy home for the Christian, they have converted into the close and joyless prison of the sectary."[38]

Toward the close of his essay, Richardson offers the following compelling observations:

> **But by what right do men presume to add to the conditions of salvation, or restrict the privileges of Christian liberty? Since He who created and redeemed man, has given to him a basis of Christian faith and Christian union, adapted by infinite wisdom to the requirements of his nature, by what authority do men presume to modify or change it? Surely the simple gospel which saves men has power to unite them in Christian love. Certainly no other foundation can be laid for Christian union, than the great fundamental truth for which Jesus and all his martyrs suffered. "On this rock," he declares, "I will build my church." It is then a basis not merely of individual salvation, but of *church* union, and this is Christian union.**
>
> **But is this the foundation on which the "Evangelical Alliance" proposes to unite the discordant parties of Christendom? If it has acknowledged that there is a common faith, and, to some extent, omitted in its proposed basis peculiar denominational opinions, has it embraced therein the gospel as defined by Paul, (1 Cor. xv.) or the good confession made by Peter, (Math. xvi. 16.)? If it has stated some great truths, has it not, at the same time, employed expressions ambiguous and unscriptural? And how greatly does it seem to have fallen short of those simple yet sublime conceptions of *unity and diversity*; of law and liberty; of principle and practice, exhibited by Christ and his Apostles!**[39]

To summarize, in his treatment of the futility of doctrinal conformity as a basis for Christian unity, Richardson contrasts the gospel with doctrinal understanding such as found in the Protestant creeds. By requiring their members to assent to these creeds, they have merely replaced the infallibility of the Pope, as Richardson observed, with the infallibility of their own understanding of scripture. In this respect, they were precursors of the modern heirs of the Restoration Movement, who simply ignore the fact that those doctrines which they require as a condition for fellowship constitute their creed— a truth not diminished by the fact that their creed is unwritten.

Ketcherside and Unity in Diversity

Having explored the thinking of the Restoration fathers regarding the right to private judgment in interpreting scripture — which they refer to as *opinion*— and the infeasibility of any attempt to unify people on the basis of their interpretations, we now turn to the thinking of Carl Ketcherside. The reader may judge the extent to which my thesis regarding the similarity of his thought and that of the father has been sustained.

While reading Ketcherside, it is important to recognize that by *opinion* he— like the Restoration fathers— refers to doctrinal interpretation, that is, an *opinion* as to the *meaning* of the biblical text. Like the founders of the Restoration Movement, he made distinguished between *divine* revelation and *human* understanding— between what God *said* in scripture and what men think he *meant* by what he said.

It is also helpful to recognize that when Ketcherside uses the phrase "unity in diversity," he has reference to a *unity* of faith— embracing all who have obeyed the gospel— without regard to their *diversity* of doctrinal interpretations. His thinking, like that of Thomas Campbell before him, is based on Paul's injunction to "Accept one another, then, just as Christ

accepted you, in order to bring praise to God" (Romans 15:7). While we become children of God through obedience to the *gospel*, it is the function of apostolic *doctrine* to edify and enlighten them.

Below are numerous excerpts from essays by Ketcherside, allowing him to speak for himself.

Religion of Fact

It appears that Carl Ketcherside first used the expression "unity in diversity" in his 1958 essay "Religion of Fact." The essay opens by noting that the system of religion proposed by God for the reign of the Messiah was designed to unite all things (Ephesians 1:9, 19). Ketcherside observes,

> **Since no plan for unity would be required by those who were already united, it follows that the plan of heaven was adapted to those who were out of harmony with God and each other.[40]**

Given that the plan was designed to unite those who were naturally in disagreement, Ketcherside suggests that an examination of it will reveal its superiority over every other religion and confirm its divine origin. He then goes on to observe:

> **God is the author of the human mind and the creator of the intellect. He can appreciate the scope and range of human thought and reason. He did not organize our minds alike any more than he arranged our facial features all alike. Men cannot think alike any more than they can look alike. It is impossible for all of them to entertain the same opinions. If they did, they would all seek the same employment and there would only be one universal vocation. The world would not function long if imagination and rationalization were forcibly funneled**

into one rut.

In spite of this, every system of religion devised by man has been founded upon opinion. This is one of the trademarks of human religions. *They are all religions of opinion***. For that reason they are all calculated to divide rather than to unite men. The sectarian divisions are the logical fruits of such religions. They cannot help but divide for the germ of division is in the seed from which they all sprung. The first great cleavage from simple Christianity came upon the basis of opinion. Every other sect since has sprung from the same source, an attempt to confine the opinions and imaginations of men behind creedal barriers.**

The religion of heaven is a religion founded upon facts. These are but statements of acts, of deeds done in our behalf. They are commended unto us by testimony, and upon the basis of that testimony we believe. Faith is the belief of testimony. And because the Father had mercy upon frail creatures steeped in ignorance and sin, and because, in His grace, He desired the salvation of even the lowliest in intellectual attainment and ability, He hinged our salvation not upon an understanding of abstract propositions, nor upon a complex and intricate philosophy or system of doctrine, but upon one fact, and only one— that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. This is the foundation of the Christian religion, and one who was commissioned, like a skilled master builder, to lay that foundation, declared, "For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 3:11). Any man who believes that fact and proves his belief by the one test of faith— immersion in the name of the Lord Jesus— is admitted into the fellowship of the Father and the Son.

In the Christian religion men dare not make opinions tests of fellowship. On this point the revelation of God is clear. "As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not for disputes over opinions" (Rom. 14:1). The reason is clear. One man in Christ believes one

thing, while another disagrees (verse 2). But God welcomes them both (verse 3). One man esteems a certain thing highly, another makes no distinction. Neither is to pass judgment on the other (verse 13). God recognizes that we cannot and will not entertain the same opinions, and His revealed religion takes this into account, and provides for a *unity in diversity* as relates to such matters.

His interest in this regard is that men not bind these opinions upon others as bases of union, for any attempt to do so will rend and divide. Therefore, such opinions are to be kept between a man and God, lest in his insistence that others conform, he destroy the work of God (verse 20). The plan for the ages is to "unite all things" but it does not include in the unity desired an absolute agreement upon opinions. In this area there is liberty. The unity here is an undivided belief that men are free where God permits liberty. "The unity of the Spirit" embraces seven planks in its platform, every one of which expresses a divine oneness (Eph. 4:4-6). It is ignorance of God's will and plan which has plagued the ranks of professed restorationists and shattered them into bitter splinter parties.[41]

Ketcherside acknowledges that some may immediately ask how such a view can be harmonized with Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 1:10, where he insists "that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment." To this Ketcherside responds:

Whatever this means it cannot mean that it was an absolute necessity to agree upon all opinions, for in this realm the apostle recognized there could be legitimate differences. Neither can it refer to matters of personal judgment unless Paul was guilty of advocating one thing and lapsing into contradictory conduct, for there was a sharp contention between Barnabas and himself "so that they separated from each other" (Acts 15:39). Nor can it refer to perfect knowledge and equal attainment of perception. "Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same

thing" (Phil. 3:16).

The context shows that the thing Paul was condemning in Corinth was the party spirit. He declares, "What I mean is that each one of you says, 'I belong to Paul,' or 'I belong to Apollos,' or 'I belong to Cephas,' or 'I belong to Christ.'" Please note that it is just as sinful to call a party by the name of Christ for the purpose of segregating it from other believers, as to call it by the name of Cephas or Paul. To designate a party in Christendom as "The Church of Christ" with the motive of separating it from other children of God, is as wrong as to call one after the name of Paul for the same reason. The party spirit is not rendered sinless by calling over it the name of the sinless one.

Paul was condemning the laying of other foundations and boasting of men (3:21). These defeat the eternal purpose of God. They give the impression Christ is divided. On the testimony of God (1 Cor. 2:1) there should be agreement and unanimity. "The same mind and the same judgment" is a phrase opposed to "dissensions" in the passage under discussion. This word is from SCHISMA, which means "a rent, or tear." The fabric of Christian fellowship is to be kept intact, rather than torn or rent by partisan strife.

There is a diversity in the minds of those who compose the church of God. Some are highly cultivated, some are limited in ability, as evidenced by Matthew 25:15. Some are quick to perceive, some are slow and deliberate. In some the faculty of retentiveness is very acute, in others it is not. The environments, educational opportunities, circumstances of rearing, and local influences, are different, and all of these modify our individual thinking. Accordingly, men differ in every department and phase of life: science, jurisprudence, medicine, psychology, and agriculture, to mention but a few. It is by virtue of such differences of opinion that research is stimulated and constantly carried on. We learn

forbearance and tolerance as a result of our divergencies of opinion, and thus we develop a sense of social consciousness.[42]

Searching for the Answer

In a series of articles on the failure of the Christian philosophy to stem the rising tide of paganism, Ketcherside lays the foundation for a proposed remedy in his January 1960 essay "Searching for the Answer." The fundamental problem, he indicates, is that the world has not been won to the sovereignty of Christ— a failure that may itself be attributed to the division Christ's followers into warring camps. With that thought in mind, he writes:

> **What, then, must be the attitude of those believers who are soberly and seriously concerned about the salvation of mankind? Does it not stand to reason that they must hate "enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, and party spirit," which are listed as "works of the flesh," and which will keep those who do such things from inheritance in the kingdom of God? Are they not obligated to study, pray, and work for the repairing of all the breaches in the Christian wall? Must they not wholly and completely dedicate their lives to the eradication of schisms and the conditions which produce them? Is there any crusade in modern times of greater consequence than this? If the world believes that God sent His Son, and recognizes the fulness of the impact of His advent, wars will cease, swords will be beaten into plowshares, and the desert will blossom as a rose. Yet this can only transpire when those who believe are one.**
>
> **The greatest problem of believers is unbelief! Because they cannot see how unity of all believers can be achieved they do not believe it can be. They forget that we are to "walk by faith and not by sight." Their fear causes them to settle for something much less than Jesus prayed**

for. They are content if they can have peace within the party to which they give allegiance. But partisan peace is a chimera, a will-o'-the-wisp, and destructive of true peace. The party spirit is antagonistic to peace. Like the moth, it perpetuates itself only by consuming the fabric in which it hides. If every party in the Christian realm had perfect peace within itself, that would not be the unity for which Jesus prayed, and under such a condition men would be content, and true unity would never be attained.[43]

Ketcherside then observes that while each believer sustains a relationship to Jesus through the Holy Spirit, they are not all at the same stage of spiritual development. They vary in knowledge and maturity. But they are held together by their love for one another, which they regard as greater than their differences. But no party now in existence embraces all the children of God on earth. Tragically, they have all been divided into splinter groups. To remedy this situation, we must first rid ourselves of the sectarian attitude— a task that will not be easy. He writes:

> **It will not be easy to rid our hearts of the party spirit. We have been conditioned by past teaching and environment to regard the party as the church of God. This is true of all. Some have been less partisan than others, but none are wholly free from the taint. No party or faction** *as it now exists* **can accomplish God's full purpose on earth. There must be a revolution, a transformation, a metamorphosis. No transfusion of spirituality into the party, no artificial respiration of any party will meet the needs of the present crisis. The party must sink into oblivion that the church of God may replace it in our lives. Old things must pass away; all things must become new.**
>
> **This does not mean we must relinquish any truth we have discovered, nor compromise any verity we have held. To do this would be to lose all and to banish hope of our salvation. But truth must cease to be regarded as a**

partisan possession or be defended as a private monopoly. We must recognize that those in Christ are at different stages in their acquisition of knowledge of truth. Those who are fortunate enough to have a superior knowledge of truth should not browbeat and assail the less fortunate. Those who have climbed higher should not kick those on a lower level. Those who have much need not feel obligated to deny the little that is possessed by another.

We should begin to manifest a philanthropic spirit, and create an atmosphere of love. The table of the Lord should be set in our meetings for all baptized believers whose lives are orderly and decorous. We should make it clear that *we make nothing a test of fellowship that God has not made a condition of salvation***. Jesus declares that he who believes and is baptized shall be saved. If one can be saved from all the sins of his past on that basis, and is thus added to the one body, we ought not to demand more of him to be welcomed into our hearts. The objection is made that on this basis we would be forced to welcome those who are allied with sectarian bodies in some instances. That is true, and we should welcome all of God's children who come among us, regardless of present affiliation. We should not be sectarian in our opposition to sectarianism.**[44]

While the idea that we have brethren scattered among the various sects infuriates some, Ketcherside maintains that this was the position of Thomas Campbell, Alexander Campbell, Moses E. Lard, Benjamin Franklin, David Lipscomb, and even Daniel Sommer. In evidence of that claim, he quotes from the writings of each and then asks:

Do these quotations prove there are Christians in sectarian bodies? Certainly not! Their authors are fallible men and uninspired. We have not cited them as authorities on that point. *But they do prove the position I hold is not a "new doctrine.***" Will our critics affirm that Campbell, Lard, Franklin, Lipscomb, and Sommer were "liberals" and "radicals" and "modernists"? Will they brand them**

as apostates? The truth is that all of the leading minds in the restoration movement were at a unit on this point. Benjamin Franklin labored under the presumption that the position we hold was "not doubted by any brother." It was not doubted either, until the factions which grew out of the restoration crystallized into so many small sects, motivated by the narrow and intolerant spirit which is the mark of sectarianism.

Are you prepared for the logical conclusion? Since the position we advocate is the one held by all of the brethren from the inception of the restoration movement, *then the opposite position is a "new doctrine."* **Indeed, it is a modern doctrine that honest misunderstanding or error in interpretation of a scriptural teaching, nullifies and negates the spiritual relationship into which one enters by the new birth. Upon such a premise we can never gather the scattered flock of God, and all we can offer them is an opportunity to leave one sect and be initiated into another by submitting to baptism at the hands of a "Church of Christ preacher." This is the new, novel and modern doctrine that is today called "gospel" by so many of our brethren.**

Let there be no misunderstanding of my position. I believe that every sincere penitent believer in the fact that Jesus is God's Son, who is immersed in water upon the basis of that faith, is God's child, and my brother. He may not, at the time of his immersion, know all of the blessings accruing from the act or connected with it, but his standing with God is not determined by knowledge of such matters, but by faith in Jesus as God's Son and the Messiah. I believe that sectarianism is sinful. It is condemned by God and must not be condoned by men. But many of God's children have been ensnared and enslaved within its toils. I want to assist them to freedom. I am dedicated to unrelenting opposition to any form of tyranny over their hearts, regardless of the name under which it operates. The fight for unity of all believers is really a battle for freedom.[45]

Opinions and Unity

Toward the end of 1960, Carl Ketcherside published an essay titled "Opinions and Unity." In it he deals with the infeasibility of any approach to unity based on agreement of opinion or doctrinal interpretation. He notes:

> **The reason why schisms always occur in the wake of propagation of opinions as bases for religious unity, is easily determined by the rational student. Such unity must be predicated upon moral and spiritual values. Opinions are neither. An opinion is the result of a purely intellectual process. It is the fruit produced by human and finite rationalization. All human reasoning must be based upon experience, and since the experiences, environments, and backgrounds of men are variant and divergent, their modes of reasoning will differ. We can only reason from the known to the unknown, and since no two persons on earth have exactly the same degree of knowledge in all fields, the inferences drawn or conclusions reached, will be as different from each other as the persons themselves are different.** *We can no more think alike than we can look alike.* **Therefore, any arbitrary pronouncement of an opinion, or set of opinions, as a basis of fellowship, will only destroy that state it was intended to create.**[46]

The danger, Ketcherside explains, does not lie in having different doctrinal views— since differences are unavoidable— but in seeking to bind our views upon others as tests of Christian fellowship:

> **Men will have opinions and they will differ in them. There is no way to offset such, nor should one be sought. Such differences are not dangerous in themselves. They provide the stimuli for all research and are responsible for all progress. It is only when men, through pride, exalt their conjectures to the realm of law, and seek to bind them upon others, that harm results. The danger, then, is not in having an opinion, nor in holding one, nor even in**

expressing it as such. No rational being can keep from having opinions, for it would be ridiculous to suppose that the intellect would be interminably employed in the reasoning process, and never reach a conclusion based on the probability of such reasoning. A problem is created only when an opinion is pressed or forced upon another, who recognizes an equal right to have his own.

In addition to speculation, or opinion, man moves in two other mental realms. These are the realms of knowledge and faith. In each of these a state of certainty may be attained, for the evidence upon which these two are postulated is not probable. *Knowledge has to do with personal experience, faith with the experience of others*. **Both of these are arrived at through testimony. Knowledge is produced by the evidence submitted by one's own sense. He knows that fire produces a sensation called heat, and ice a sensation designated cold. He knows certain roses are possessed of a color called red, and violets a tint called blue. Knowledge is, in its very nature, accumulative. The experiences of the past constitute a foundation upon which to build in the future.** *No two people have the same degree of knowledge, for no two have had identical experiences, nor are possessed of equal perceptive and retentive faculties.* **Those who are brought into contact with the world about them, do not have the same ability to grasp the significance of what they hear, see or touch, nor the same power of memory as a basis for future interpretations.**

Any system purposing to secure unity based upon conformity in opinion or equal attainment of knowledge is doomed at its inception. *It proposes to accomplish what is, by nature, impossible.* **Yet it is upon these two postulates virtually every attempt at unity has been made in the past. The wreckage and disunity left in the wake of all such schemes is ample proof of their unreliability. Is unity, then, unobtainable? Not so! Certainly in the realms of knowledge and opinion it must be a unity of diversity, but in the cohesive element which God has ordained as the divine basis for unity of believers, there can be unanimity,**

for it is *faith*.

> **Faith is the certainty of the experience of others. It is the result of the mind acting upon the evidence presented to it by such witnesses. If one is fully convinced of the credibility of the witnesses, if he has no reason to doubt that they know what they testify, and testify what they know, he must believe. On no other basis can rational men proceed. Since reliable witnesses testify to facts, and since facts are things done and said, the only knowledge required is of the facts to which the witnesses testify.** *Since no amount of speculation or opinion can alter facts, it is possible to be united on the basis of faith.* **The richest provision of grace is a system of religion based upon faith. No other is adapted to man in his present state. We will never recapture the unity of the primitive community of saints until we first understand the basis of that unity. All who believed were together.**[47]

Unity in Diversity

The January 1961 issue of *Mission Messenger* **contained an essay by Ketcherside titled "Unity in Diversity," in which he explored the nature of unity and the means for attaining it. In what may be a surprising statement to some, he writes:**

> **So long have we advocated division, in the mistaken view that by such a means could purity be achieved, we have allowed our consciences to become seared and our hearts to become insensitive and numbed, until a plea for unity and brotherhood falls upon deaf ears. Our Lord has delayed his coming, and we have arisen and begun to smite our fellow servants. Many are so cold and calloused that they look with jaundiced eye and prejudiced mind upon any attempt at peacemaking. They have been conditioned to think in terms of suspicion and hate. They resent those who would pluck up the thorns and briers of partisan animosity. I have long wondered how the seed of our**

> **contemporary schismatic thought took such firm root in our hearts at first.** *Believers in Christ could hardly be more divided if they had been commanded to do so*.[48]

Ketcherside notes that some object that unity in diversity is possible. They argue that if there is unity, there can be no diversity; and if there is diversity, there can be no unity. The fallacy in such thinking lies in their confusion of unity with conformity in doctrinal interpretations. As examples of the existence of unity in diversity, Ketcherside cites the areas of music, the planetary system, the human body, spiritual gifts, and the body of Christ. Regarding the members of that body, he writes:

> **They differ in many respects. They are divergent in degree of knowledge, intellectual ability, talent, skill and function. In the spiritual family, as in the earthly, there are babies, children, young men and fathers. All have not attained the same growth. These entertain varied opinions. If they did not, the fourteenth chapter of Romans would be useless. It begins with the admonition, "As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not for disputes over opinions." We dispute over matters about which we disagree, but such disputes are forbidden in the realm of opinion. Here tolerance and forbearance are enjoined. This is positive proof that the unity which Paul enjoins does not entail agreement in matters of opinion. The unity lies in the fact that although we entertain different views about eating meats, observing days, etc., "we are the Lord's" (Rom. 14:8).**[49]

While we are not required to think alike, Ketcherside continues, we are required to love one another despite of our diversity of views:

> **We are not to demand conformity to our opinions upon the part of others, but, "The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God" (verse 22). It is not required that we all believe alike about everything, for it is**

plainly stated, "One believes he may eat anything, while the weak man eats only vegetables" (verse 2). But it is required that we all love each other in spite of our variety of views, and that we esteem brotherhood more highly than our personal preferences. "If your brother is being injured by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love" (verse 15). "Thus, sinning against your brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ" (1 Cor. 8:12).[50]

Regarding the truth of his contention, Ketcherside offers as evidence the practice of his critics.

> **They do not agree with each other upon every matter; they violently disagree upon some things, even how to treat us! The degree of unity they do possess is one of diversity. It is not a question of whether they must agree upon all points, for they do not.** *The only question is which matters they will arbitrarily decide upon as grounds for division between themselves and other brethren***. It is here the party spirit is manifested. Each faction is segregated from the others because of emphasis upon some specific issue, or a multiple of issues.** *This becomes the criterion of faithfulness or loyalty***. A faithful church is one which is "lined up" on the divisive issue. It is the rallying ground for bitter partisans. It is the measuring reed by which all must be judged.**[51]

Those who claim a unity of conformity in doctrinal understanding are invariably inconsistent:

> **They violate their own announced position "at sundry times and in divers manners." Any other unity would demand perfect knowledge of all who participate. Yet, none of these claim to possess infallible judgment. All of them oppose the pope because he makes such a claim. It is amazing how men who possess rational ability can allow themselves to be so "brain washed" as to ignore even the factors in their own lives which demonstrate the fallacies in their contention. There is not one congregation on this**

earth where all of the members agree upon every point of interpretation. There are no two preachers in the world who see everything alike. What unity they have is one of diversity, and there will never be any other kind where human beings are involved. Those who contend for any other are actually sowing the seed of strife and discord. They are apostles of division and disciples of schism!

In the pursuit of that unity which should be the goal of every saint of God, we must first lay a foundation. We believe that such a foundation must possess two parts. It must be based upon the supreme, absolute and *sole authority of the word* **of God, and upon** *the inalienable right of private and individual judgment***. Any union or association of believers which ignores or negates either of these factors is doomed to failure before it starts. To draw up any compact or agreement, regardless of how sincere the intentions of those who produce it, or how well written it may be, if it sets aside these two considerations, it can only generate dissension while it is in force, and culminate in eventual dissolution.**

The Bible contains a revelation from God. It is the repository of the living oracles, and these are divine in origin. The authority of this revelation must be supreme in every area which it covers. It is the right and duty of every human being who is a subject of that revelation to read and study it, and thus to familiarize himself with its content. It is equally his duty to read with a view of understanding and grasping the significance of what God has spoken, and to follow his convictions of the requirements contained in it. This obligation, stemming as it does from our relationship to God, cannot be legislated out of existence by human power, nor transferred to others by any individual.[52]

Any attempt to secure unity based on the authority of scripture must concede the inalienable right of the individual to interpret scripture according to conscience. The intervention of human priests to coerce thought and compel the conscience

enslaves the conscience and creates division among men. Ketcherside writes:

> **When we substitute submission to human authority for personal investigation of truth, and prevent difference of opinion by allowing no opinion at all, we take a leaf from the book of atheistic Communism, and make of the church of God a collection of puerile pawns and performing puppets.[53]**

Finally, Ketcherside concludes his essay by insisting that the only unity possible is one in which each member is granted the right to interpret scripture according to conscience—without the threat of rejection by those who disagree with his honest deductions. He writes:

> **There can be no unity which does not allow for diversity of opinion. This was the nature of the unity of the early church. The saints of that age had many problems of greater significance than those which now trouble and disturb us, but they welcomed each other as Christ had welcomed them. Our opposers are living proof of the correctness of our thesis, for while denying that there can be unity in diversity, they practice it. It is only by tolerance of their divergent views and variant ideas that they are able to unite long enough to oppose us.**
>
> **We need once again to recapture the meaning of the sovereign authority of the word of God in our lives, and to restore the inalienable right of every man to approach the Book and sincerely to formulate convictions based upon an understanding of its demands upon individual life. Then, if we will discuss our divergent views in love, respecting those who dissent as children of God, and not seek to enforce upon them our conclusions, we will at last be demonstrating that degree of spiritual maturity essential to enable us to solve the problem of disunity, which is actually rooted in immaturity. "But, I, brethren, could not address you as spiritual men, but . . . as babes in Christ . . . For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you**

not of the flesh?" (1 Cor. 3:1, 3).[54]

The Plea for Unity

In May of 1961, Ketcherside's essay "The Plea for Unity" was published in *Mission Messenger*. It begins with a summary and restatement of the author's aim regarding the unity of believers. He then suggests that what is needed is a restored vision of a united people— one that does not compromise conviction on any point yet regards as brethren those with whom we differ. He writes:

> **As I view it, we have been lulled into thinking we are helpless to offset the existing state of division. So long as we thus think, we will do nothing about it. This is actually working against God's great design. Someone must restore the vision of a united people. Everything in the universe began with an idea. There can be no accomplishment without an idea, or an ideal. So long as we think in terms of division, we must expect divisions to occur. We are what we are today because of what we thought yesterday.** *We are just where our thinking has brought us now; we will be where our thinking takes us tomorrow*. **If we would better conditions we must alter our thinking. We have division because we thought in terms of division; we can only have unity when we think in terms of unity.**[55]

In defining fellowship, Ketcherside writes:

> **Under no circumstance should we allow honest differences of interpretation or opinion to affect our view of fellowship. It is here we have all made a tragic error in the past. We were taught that fellowship was equivalent to endorsement, and that to be in fellowship with one was to be in complete agreement with him. It is true that we were inconsistent but we rationalized in such a manner as to satisfy ourselves and stifle conscience. Such a view of fellowship is in error, and we need to alter our position so**

we can be in harmony with the word of God. To be in the fellowship with a man does not mean you endorse all of his ideas or actions. It does not mean that you share all of his views and opinions.

Fellowship is a state or condition which we enter in response to the call of God (1 Cor. 1:9). It is a relationship we enjoy as "fellows" or brothers. Every person who is in Christ is in the fellowship. Not all who are in the fellowship agree upon every matter. Perhaps no two of them do so. But they did not enter the fellowship through mutual agreement or understanding on all points. They entered it through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and an expressed obedience to that faith in baptism. Every sincere baptized believer is in the fellowship. This has been true since the planting of the church of God on earth.

It is important to remember that the word "fellowship" is a noun. It is never used as a verb. We should not belittle such truths, because it is necessary that we employ sound speech. We do not want to confuse others, and to avoid doing so, we must not only use the language of the Spirit, but must do it in the same manner in which the Spirit has used it. Thus, we should not say that we fellowship a certain person. We are in the fellowship with certain persons. We never ask, "Do you partnership him?" or "Do you companionship him"? By the same token we should not ask, "Do you fellowship him"? To do so, removes fellowship from a *state* or condition and reduces it to an *act*. It then becomes something which we may extend or withdraw, when, in reality, it is a state into which we enter. That is why the expression "withdraw fellowship" is not in the scriptures.

We do not "fellowship" things, or ideas, or doctrines. Fellowship is a relation between persons, like brotherhood or partnership. The word "fellow" shows this. It is from a word meaning "a companion" or "one who shares." We do not fellowship societies, instrumental music, Bible classes, individual cups, etc. I mention this

because of the common error of many of my good brethren who have been conditioned by long practice to misuse the word in such a manner. We need to purify our speech if we would please God.

The implication of what we have said is simply this. Fellowship is not a state that is entered because of a position on the things that have been allowed to divide us. We come into the fellowship by response to the call of God. Anyone who makes the proper response to that call enters the fellowship. He may not even know there has been division created by an attitude toward certain things. He may be unaware that God's family is rent or divided. Just as the fellowship is not entered by a view of these issues, and because of that, it is our contention that it is not broken or destroyed by an opinion on these matters. Fellowship is brotherhood. Brotherhood is the result of common Fatherhood. Disagreements with each other about certain things do not remove us from the family. The term used to describe the family relationship of God's children is "fellowship."[56]

After illustrating his point with the case of instrumental music, Ketcherside observes:

As I see it, I am not commanded or obligated by God's revelation to love the instrument. I am under the orders of heaven to love my brethren. If I allow anything to influence me not to love them, that thing will destroy me even if I oppose it. "He who does not love does not know God, for God is love."

The point at issue with me is not so much whether instrumental music in worship is of God or the devil. I have some brethren who affirm it is of God, others that it is of the devil, others who do not know, and still others who do not care. Those who are interested on both sides quote scriptural passages to sustain their views. Frequently they use the same passages— one to prove it is of God, the other to show it is of the devil. What concerns

me primarily as of the present is whether those who use it are brethren. If they are and I refuse to regard them as brethren, or if I do not love them as such, then I am of the devil regardless of where instrumental music originated. "By this it may be seen who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not do right is not of God, nor he who does not love his brother" (1 John 3:10).[57]

Restoration Astray

In a 1961 essay titled "Restoration Astray" Ketcherside examines the root causes for the failure of the Restoration Movement to secure unity. He writes:

> **Most of those who read this little journal are the heirs of a noble religious experiment which was launched about the beginning of the nineteenth century. It was described by one of its chief advocates as "a project to unite the Christians in all sects." In previous issues we have sought to trace the roots of this worthy endeavor. We have explored the background, character and other factors in the lives of the men who were motivated to inaugurate such a majestic program.**
>
> **We regret that our task is not completed. It would be pleasant to halt our narrative on the high plane of idealism with which the Restoration movement began. Unfortunately, that movement has now degenerated into the most divided one in the contemporary religious scene. In addition to the major cleavage occasioned by introduction of instrumental music, there are now some two dozen segments of the non-instrument group alone. We propose to examine the underlying causes contributing to the rise of factionalism and determine if possible when the disciple brotherhood abandoned its original aim. Our purpose is not to be merely critical of past attitudes but to personally profit by the mistakes of our predecessors.**

> **Certainly we can better get the Restoration movement back on the main track if we know at what point it was derailed.** [58]

After acknowledging his earlier role in perpetuating past divisions— under the delusion that his party was exclusively the one body— Ketcherside expresses regret for his intolerant disposition and lack of charity. He then affirms:

> **No segment, group, or faction growing out of the Restoration movement is the church of Christ to the exclusion of all others. Not even "The Church of Christ" as a separate organization listed in the United States Census is the church of God exclusively. The census bureau can number, list and catalogue the members of an organization, but only God knows the names of all who are in the divine organism— the one body.**[59]

Continuing under the subheading "A Forsaken Goal," Ketcherside asserts that when the movement ceased to move and became an end in itself rather than a means to an end, it became a sect:

> **The Restoration movement was not inaugurated to launch another "church" yet it has resulted in a number of warring groups being started. It is not unfair to say that those who started out to bring peace to a divided church are now the most antagonistic of all the current religious segments. Their bitter attacks upon each other by radio, newspaper, and other mass media, have made any plea for unity by them a laughing-stock among thinking people. The movement has actually ceased to "move" and has crystallized into a sect. The various parties look upon accessions from each other as "conversions" and report in partisan journals with great glee the defection of a preacher from another party to their own.**
>
> **Certainly, when the Restoration movement ceased to be a means to an end and became the end, it then and there became merely another religious organization**

among many others. It can never be restored to its original aim and purpose until its members are made to realize that the work of restoration was never completed. Only when these disciples are ready to assume the task of seeking to "unite the Christians in all the sects" can it truly be said that we have resumed where our fathers left off. We must regard the interim as a mere interlude and the structure (or structures) we have erected as but temporary at best, in many cases unnecessary and in some cases detrimental to the cause of our Lord. It will be difficult indeed for most of us to attain to this plane of thought but unless we do, we can only look forward to other divisions in the future. We will cumber the ground instead of bearing fruit and God may order that we be cut down. 60

It was Ketcherside's conclusion that the heirs of the Restoration have not only forsaken the purpose of the movement but have forgotten it. In essence, he says, we have lost sight of the task at hand:

It is necessary to re-state again and again for this generation the basis upon which the pioneers of restoration hoped to answer the prayer of Jesus for unity. Not only have they forsaken it but they have forgotten it! Thomas Campbell early learned that the foundation of the Christian system was faith in a person. He observed that the divisions existing among the believers had been caused by exalting opinions and he rightly saw that there could never be unity upon such grounds. It remained for Alexander Campbell to distinguish so aptly between faith, knowledge and opinion, and to demonstrate clearly that God had predicated unity upon the first because it was absolutely impossible to achieve upon the basis of the other two.

The creeds of men were regarded as statements of crystallized opinion, divisive in their very nature because they demanded conformity in the realm of opinion and proscribed all who could not in good conscience conform. They were not rejected merely because they were creeds,

that is, statements of belief, but because they all created a false basis of acceptance and justification by setting up agreement in irrelevant matters as the ground of salvation. It was proposed to offset and eliminate the baneful effects of these by a re-affirmation of the divine creed, belief that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ and the Son of God.

This was deemed the central fact of the whole Christian system. It was the hub which joined all of the spokes together and while these might appear to be far apart at the perimeter they were held together in a unified whole by the rim of love, that circumferential tie which maintained a unity in diversity. Those who were joined to Christ might differ about many matters of opinion and interpretation but these were to be subjects for discussion and not occasions for division. Nothing was to be regarded of the same importance as the recognition of the Sonship of Jesus for upon this fact the salvation of the whole world depended. It was primary while matters of doctrinal growth were secondary. *Faith was to hold a man to Christ while opinions were held by men in Christ***.[61]**

Here Ketcherside introduces the example of Alyette Raines, covered earlier in this work. It is at this point that the Restoration Movement took a decisive turn. By agreeing to accept Raines into the Mahoning Association, in spite of his Universalist views, the disciples affirmed that they could be united in faith while holding contrary opinions on matters outside the circle of faith. Ketcherside here inserts a statement by Raines, published near the end of his life and recorded in Robert Richardson's *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell***:**

The great kindness and magnanimity with which the Campbells and Walter Scott treated me after my baptism, and before I was convinced of the erroneousness of my restorationist [universalist] philosophy. They used to say to me, 'It is a mere philosophy like Calvinism and Arminianism, and no part of the gospel.' They made these *isms* **of but little value, and therefore not worth contending**

> **for, and they did not put themselves in conflict with my philosophy, but rather urged me to preach the gospel in matter and form as did the apostles. This all appeared to me to be reasonable, and I did it; and one of the consequences was, that the philosophy within me became extinct, having no longer the coals of contention by which to warm or the crumbs of sectarian righteousness upon which to feed.[62]**

After recounting the 1832 meeting between those who followed the lead of Alexander Campbell (*disciples*) and those who followed Barton W. Stone (*Christians*), Ketcherside observes:

> **It was in this instance that the distinction between faith and opinion saved the day. Those who were allied with both the "Christians" and the "disciples" believed in and proclaimed the facts of the gospel. All acknowledged that Jesus of Nazareth was the only begotten Son of God, that he was made flesh and dwelled among men, that he died for our sins, was buried, and rose again on the third day for our justification. All agreed that we are cleansed from our sins by his blood and that he ever lives to make intercession for us. All recognized him as the great high priest residing at the right hand of God. They agreed to proclaim these things in the language of the Spirit and to insist upon no special theory or view of his pre-incarnate nature. Each man might retain his personal opinion as to the mode of divine existence but to advocate such an opinion was distinct from preaching the word. Consequently they agreed to give themselves to proclaiming the gospel while retaining their opinions to themselves.[63]**

Regarding what happened to the heirs of the project "to unite the Christians in all the sects," Ketcherside writes:

> **They have become fractured into more than two dozen warring factions representing the most divided religious movement on the American scene today. Having**

abandoned the fundamental principles of the Restoration movement they have allowed themselves to degenerate into narrow parties, each with its own unwritten creed as a test of fellowship and communion. The philosophy they have espoused can only lead to more division in the future. It is prompted by "the will to divide" and nurtured by a misconception of certain elemental truths related to our relationship together in Christ Jesus. Actually legalism has been substituted for love and dogmatism has displaced liberty in the Lord.

Under the guise of upholding the authority of God's word the representatives of each faction put forward their own interpretations and opinions and these are made the criteria of judgement. The honest soul who cannot in good conscience conform is branded as a heretic and expelled from the party. There are as many standards of authority as there are factions and each faction protests that it alone is "loyal" and all of the rest are traitors and apostates. The least deviation from a traditional procedure is regarded as an excuse to destroy all brotherly relationship and becomes the occasion of another division. Nothing is so cheap, nothing so little valued among members of "The Church of Christ" as brotherhood. It can be strangled or crucified at a moment's notice and over the most trivial matters.

Although each faction still pays lip service to the distinction between matters of faith and opinion, no two groups are agreed on what things belong in either of these categories. What is considered a matter of faith by one group is recognized as a matter of opinion by others, and vice versa. Almost without exception they have lost the distinction between the gospel of Christ and the apostolic doctrine and have made the tragic mistake of concluding that all of the new covenant writings are a part of the gospel. This is the weak spot in the armor, the Achilles' heel, which must some day doom the movement to extinction unless corrected! So long as this fallacy is maintained there can be predicted a dire future of division

and strife in which blinded partisans will bite and devour one another until the inevitable fate of such conduct overtakes them.

Many of the current divisions could never have occurred if men had been true to the principles which sparked the restoration movement. Unfortunately, the Campbells and their contemporaries were succeeded by men of lesser ability and greater personal ambition and we can today see the result in a disturbed and scattered brotherhood. Men have climbed to prominence as the chief proponents or opponents of certain issues which should always have been kept in the realm of opinion. When issues are forced and stressed beyond their proper proportion and relation to the Christian system only strife and evil can result. The intemperate attack on brethren who hold certain views always results in crystallization of party feeling. Some men seem to thrive as defenders of orthodoxy and must find an issue to keep themselves in the public eye. If they do not find one they invent one or distort the position of some other brother.[64]

As an example of the type of division that has occurred among the heirs of the movement, Ketcherside cites the formal division over the pre-millennial interpretation of the scriptures:

Our separation over such matters is an outgrowth of the party spirit. This is a work of the flesh. It is a sign of unspirituality and immaturity. It will damn us if we persist in it and refuse to repent. A man may be wrong about the millennium and go to heaven if he does not have the party spirit; he may be right about the millennium and go to hell if he does have the party spirit. Any man who makes a test of fellowship out of a millennial interpretation— pre or post, pro or con— creates an unwritten creed. Such a person is a partisan and a factionalist. There have been too many such factionalists on both sides of the issue. All such persons are childish, puerile in thought, and like ordinary men of the world. "For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving like

ordinary men?"

> **If we are ever to put an end to the shameful state which now exists we must rise above the factional spirit in which we have been reared. We must recognize as our brethren those who are on both sides of the fences that men have constructed. I want it known to all who read this that I shall not allow such issues as the one under discussion to affect my relationship with any of my brethren. I propose to move freely among all of them, associate with them, respect them and love them. I shall not allow myself to be forced into any kind of party relative to the millennium through threats, coercion, group pressure or fear of boycott. It is time to call a halt to the insane frenzy of factionalism which will make a shambles of our plea![65]**

Ketcherside then suggests that the solution to the problem of division must begin with a change of attitude:

> **The division over the millennial question is merely one example of the many which harass and hamper us. All of them are the result of an attitude which makes a brother of less value than an opinion. This is an exact reversal of the attitude which sponsored the Restoration movement. Now we must make another complete change if we are to recapture the spirit of that great effort. We have forsaken "the will to unite" and have been betrayed into adoption of the "will to divide." We must once again make fellowship in Christ Jesus of greater significance than orthodoxy. Such an ideal will not be easy to attain. It must fight for every inch of ground with partisan leaders entrenched in power and prestige. But it will eventually triumph because it is the will of God. Nowhere in the sacred scriptures is division authorized or sanctioned as a means of settling differences between brethren.**
>
> **In order to properly assess the magnitude of work we must do in the recovery of the sense of brotherhood we propose to deal frankly and candidly with how and where**

the Restoration movement was diverted and sidetracked. This will mean the debunking of some of our long cherished grounds for partisan boasting. Certainly those who have been regarded as party heroes will be found to be all too human and our earthly idols will be found to have feet of clay. However, our purpose will not be to affix personal judgment but simply to re-discover those lost principles which will enable us to overcome the tragic state which now renders our plea for unity a laughingstock before the world. May we have your interest in the next issue which will get to the very core of our problem.[66]

Getting Untangled

One of Ketcherside's longer essays from 1962, "Getting Untangled," examines the slogan attributed to Rupertus Meldenius, "*In essentials unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity***." While Ketcherside maintains that the slogan was originally intended to promote unity through charity, among the heirs of the Restoration Movement, it has instead led to division due to argument over the first two points. Ketcherside states: "***It is not an exaggeration to say that we are a people splintered by a slogan***."**[67] **He continues:**

> **While our disunity is regrettable and disgraces our profession it is not wholly bad. It is apparent that it is an indirect result of a motivation that is commendable. There has been a constant attempt to preserve what men conceive to be "matters of faith" and a determined resistance against erosion of spiritual values by allowing "matters of faith" to be relegated to the realm of "matters of opinion." It is possible that, in an attempt to avoid the chaos of anarchy, we have adopted the coercion of dogmatism, but we have done so with a view of defending the faith.**
>
> **It is our personal view that our fathers when confronted with the problem of innovations were betrayed**

into adopting a philosophy of attempting to preserve doctrinal purity by separation from brethren. This was no doubt the result of fear prompted by a love for truth. We do not censure them for their decision. No doubt they did the best they could under the circumstances but they passed along to us not only a heritage of disunity but the thought-pattern which will continue to divide us every time someone is forced by conscience to dissent from the party norm. We have lived long enough to see what our fathers could not see— the fruit of the seed which they planted. If we expect to eliminate the fruit of strife we must stop planting the seed of division.

It is apparent that our philosophy for settling problems is not of God, for He is "not the author of confusion but of peace." To continue blindly along the road to disunity under the mistaken idea that every time we create a new faction we please God and plant his church anew is to perpetuate a species of folly which does no honor to our mental processes. Nor can we retain the philosophy and half-heartedly settle our lesser difficulties on a different basis. We must reject and renounce the whole theory that brotherhood is based upon conformity and that we please the Father by treating some of his children like pagans and pariahs. We must go all the way back to the place where the philosophy was adopted and began to be applied and restore a sense of brotherhood and family relationship in which to approach our varied problems from a totally new perspective.[68]

Here Ketcherside proposes an investigation of the slogan attributed to Meldenius. However, he notes that our differences are based on two types of thins, depending on one's perspective: those which we have— that others oppose— and those which others have— that we oppose. He goes on to describe these two opposing groups:

Each faction belongs both to "the haves" and "the have-nots," with the possible exception of the one on top and the one on the bottom of the party pile. To the one on

top everything is a "matter of opinion" and they have no faith; to the one on the bottom everything is a "matter of faith" and they have no opinion, that is, they do not think. The first is pro-everything and the second is anti-everything! In between these two are all the rest of us striving to distinguish between what we call "faith" and "opinion."[69]

Ketcherside then introduces four points for the foundation of his analysis:

> **1. In our currently divided state anything which is possessed by one faction and opposed by the members of another is regarded as a "matter of opinion" by those possessing it and a "matter of faith" by those opposing it.**
>
> **2. In our naive vocabulary a sectarian is one who has what we oppose; a hobbyist is one who opposes what we have.**
>
> **3. The divine revelation affords no specific catalogue of what we term "matters of faith" and "matters of opinion" and does not use these terms to designate or define separate areas.**
>
> **4. Every party is built around certain points of emphasis and these are made central in the thought and essential to the existence of that party.[70]**

Ketcherside concludes that we practice a double standard:

> **It is clear to any unbiased observer that we have a double standard; one by which we judge those who have things we oppose, another by which we judge those who oppose things we have. In the first case we demand of others what we ourselves are unwilling to do in the second. When certain ones oppose what we have we insist it is our right as the ones who possess the things to determine they are matters of opinion. When we oppose what others have we deny them the right to determine what is in the realm of opinion. Let us be specific. This is crucial since it**

involves our consistency and integrity.[71]

Ketcherside illustrates this point with the case of the non-instrumental "Churches of Christ" and their opposition to the use of instrumental music in their public praise service.

> **When others oppose their classes the members insist upon acceptance of *their decision* that this is in the realm of opinion. But when opposing instrumental music they insist that those who have it also accept *their decision* that it is in the realm of faith. They are to be supreme judges in every case. On what ground can one party argue that it is the sole repository of truth and all others must kow-tow to its decisions and distinctions? If we demand that those who use the instrument, which they regard as a matter of opinion, give it up in behalf of unity, are we not by the same reasoning obligated to give up classes and individual cups, which we regard as matters of opinion, in order to have unity? Who determines which one of our more than two dozen parties is "the faithful church" to whose infallible pronouncements and irrevocable decisions all others must do obeisance?**[72]

Ketcherside then suggests a solution:

> **We will not alleviate the situation by trying to untangle each knot in the snarled up mess. We must go back and re-think our position on the basis of righteousness, truth and love, without reference to partisan prejudice. We cannot solve our problem, for instance, by attacking it as members of two warring clans— "The Christian Church" and "The Church of Christ." We can only solve it by approaching it as brothers in the Lord and members of the one body. Let us study it in that light just once and see what a difference it makes.**[73]

Using as an example the two attitudes within the Restoration Movement toward instrumental music in the corporate worship, Ketcherside raises the question of which is correct:

Those who oppose instrumental music generally assert that it is in the realm of faith; those who endorse it affirm that it is a *matter* of opinion. Both sides agree that no opinion should be made a test of fellowship and that we should be tolerant with divergent opinions. However, so long as one side regards the use of the instrument as being in the realm of faith it appears there can be no fraternization until the other is willing to renounce the instrument. Accordingly, those who oppose the instrument refuse any brotherly recognition to those who employ it. Generally they will not even call on such a person to lead in prayer if he visits their meetings; frequently they refuse to acknowledge him as a child of God or a brother in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Those who use instrumental music in corporate worship are convinced that their opposers are making laws which God did not *make* and are seeking to bind such laws upon them. They feel their Christian liberty is at stake and to relinquish the instrument at the demand of the opposing forces is to "surrender to the antis." They rebel against the very thought of acknowledging that to be a sin which their conscience leads them to believe is a matter of indifference. The two attitudes create a stalemate and make it appear there is no way by which a real sense of brotherhood can be restored until one side or the other "gives in." Neither side can conscientiously do so with their current views.

Which viewpoint is correct? Is the use of the instrument in the realm of faith or is it in the realm of opinion? Because there are two answers given, we may find a solution which will allow us to regard each other as Christians and make it possible for us to work together in some areas although we may not eliminate all of the points of tension and friction. This will *certainly* be better than the present state of absolute isolation from each other. *We must begin by a recognition of each other as brothers.* **This is easily done if we will visualize a congregation worshiping together as brethren in Christ. Certain ones begin to**

suggest that they would like to see an instrument used in the praise service. The controversy eventually waxes warm and they separate from each other. Those who desired to have the instrument now begin using one. So there are two groups of worshipers in the community; one with the instrument, the other without. But if they were brothers before, they are brothers still. Putting in an instrument did not negate the new birth by which they entered God's family.

Each must admit the honesty of the other. Opposition to an instrument does not make one honest; endorsement of the instrument does not make one dishonest. So we have two groups of honest brethren differing as to the scriptural propriety of instrumental music. Since we are obligated to avoid "setting at nought a brother" each must treat the other with proper respect and regard for the divine relationship. It will help to remember that the new covenant scriptures nowhere specifically brand the use of instrumental music as a sin. Those who conclude it is a sin do so by deduction from certain scriptural principles. Those who endorse the instrument say that such deduction is not warranted by the facts in the case. Whether or not the use of the instrument is justified is a question of interpretation.

It is the opinion of one group based upon study of God's revelation that the use of instrumental music is wrong; it is the opinion of the other group based upon their study of God's word that its use is justifiable. *It is a matter of opinion then whether the use of the instrument is a "matter of faith" or a "matter of opinion."* **Since all are agreed that we dare not divide** *over* **opinions, we are obligated to respect the views of each other until such time as we can decide whether the question is in the realm of faith or opinion. When we can all agree upon whether it is one or the other the question will be settled, for all of us are anxious to have unity on matters of faith, and to avoid division over matters of opinion. Meanwhile, one side of the issue cannot dogmatically assert it is one or the other**

and force brethren into conformity contrary to conscience. All we can do is to avoid making it a test of fellowship until we arrive at the point where we can sincerely agree upon its status.

But suppose we never reach such agreement? We must continue to love and respect each other as brethren until we stand before the judgment bar of God. He will adjust all of those matters in conformity with his own will and eternal purpose. "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the *judgment* seat of Christ" (Romans 14:10). All matters not clearly revealed will finally be adjudicated by Him to whom all of us, instrumental and non-instrumental alike, claim to direct our praise and homage. We are not commanded to love instrumental music but we *are* commanded to love our brethren and not to "set them at nought" over matters of opinion.

Does this mean that in many communities the brethren will continue to meet in separate locations? Certainly so. In some areas, through love which transcends all else, there may be a gradual integration of forces which will enable all to maintain spiritual integrity of individual conscience. In most cases this will not soon occur, in many cases it will never do so. But there will be a recognition of brotherhood and a realistic application of the principle of local autonomy of the congregation which will enable both groups to respect the opinion of each other. The oneness for which we plead is not a geographical unity but a *spiritual affinity*. There are many areas besides singing in which we do agree and in these we may lift up a united witness and testimony. We should not allow our views about one facet of service in which we disagree to negate all of those areas in which we agree. Because one light is burnt out in a chandelier is no excuse for bursting all of the other bulbs and creating a total blackout. If someone throws a ball through the front window we will gain nothing by smashing all the others

out![74]

Ketcherside then offers his opinion on what one should do whose conscience forbids him to sing to the accompaniment of instrumental music in corporate worship:

> **What can one do whose conscience forbids him to join in the praise service when an instrument is used? He can refrain from singing under *such* circumstances and should do so. He need not be impolite or boorish, but remember the injunction, "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God" (Rom. 14:22). He can meditate in silence and be grateful to God that an increasing passion of love for the brotherhood makes it possible for him to respect those whose views and opinions are so divergent from his own. At the same time he can pray for the day when an even greater sense of fellowship and unity will dispel the clouds and clear the mists away.**[75]

Responding to the suggestion that a person whose conscience forbids participation in the corporate singing accompanied by instrumental music should avoid meetings where the instrument is used, Ketcherside asserts that this depends upon the individual. Each person must be granted the liberty of private judgment. For his part, Ketcherside says:

> **As for myself, I cannot stay away from those whom I love and regard as brothers. I feel obligated on the basis of 2 Corinthians 2:8 to confirm my love to all of my brothers. I think this must be done through association and by overt acts. I want to learn from my brothers regardless of how much I differ with them on certain things. I do not want to impoverish my spirit by an attitude of exclusivism.**[76]

He goes on to observe that the problem is not the instrument itself but rather the philosophy by which doctrinal differences are viewed:

> **Instrumental music is not our only problem. It is**

just one of many. I have referred to it because, in the eyes of many, it is the gravest one. Indeed, there are those among the two dozen non-instrument factions who would gladly discuss settling the differences among themselves if we would exclude the brethren who use the instrument from consideration. This is a childish approach and will never really settle anything. We are divided because *we have inherited a philosophy of maintaining doctrinal purity by division among brethren***. This fallacious and unworkable system was devised by our fathers and first applied by them when instrumental music was introduced. It is useless to try and adjust our problems which have arisen since that time while retaining the false concept which gave them birth.**

The axe must be laid at the root of the tree. We must go back to the initial cleavage and restore the concept of brotherhood in spite of differences. There is little use to grub out the sprouts while the roots lie untouched for we will only provide for other divisions in the future. What I have said in this essay about instrumental music is applicable to charitable institutions, colleges, individual cups, Bible classes, uninspired literature, fermented wine, and all of the other troublesome issues. Many who are upon both sides of these questions are honest, sincere, humble saints of God. They want to serve Him acceptably. They do not want to be uncharitable and divisive. They realize the sad state in which Zion languishes.

But they have grown up in parties, or grown up and come into parties, each of which thinks it is the church of God to the exclusion of all others. They cannot see how they can be true to God and love those who differ with them to the extent that they can cut across the party lines. The hope for the future lies in the fact that without a single exception everyone of these will affirm that we dare not divide over opinions. Now we do not ask those who use individual containers to regard this as a matter of faith and seek to bind their use upon others. We would oppose that. Neither do we ask those who oppose individual

containers to regard it as a matter of opinion and begin to adopt them. We would oppose that as a flagrant violation of conscience.[77]

In conclusion, Ketcherside offers his own proposal:

> **Here is our proposal. Since honest brethren sincerely disagree over whether the use of individual containers is a matter of faith or a matter of opinion, let us remember that it is a problem of interpretation. The big question now before us is an opinion as to whether the use of cups is a matter of faith or a matter of opinion. Since we cannot force another to see the things as we do let us respect each man's right of opinion as to which category is correct. In this fashion we can at least maintain a relationship which will allow us to work together in many areas as brethren with hope that time, love, and the Holy Spirit, may bring to pass a better day.** *No one need give up any truth he has ever learned*, **no one need sacrifice one item of conscience. Let congregations determine their own procedure with utmost love for others who differ. Let us visit each other and share with each other in such meetings as do not demand sacrifice of spiritual integrity.**
>
> **To those who put Christ first and exalt him above all else a sense of brotherhood is greater than any view about music or cups. As the divine magnet who draws all men unto himself, he should exert enough power to hold us close enough to him that we shall remain together. So long as Jesus is our only creed this will be true; when we allow other things to become a creed we will dissolve over differences. If Jesus is central in our concept of The Way, our agreement in him will be more powerful than our disagreement about things on the rim of Christianity. We will be transformed by him rather than conformed to each other.**
>
> **But we are asked if a man can reach heaven who is in error? Certainly so, else there would be no one in heaven. Freedom from error is not a condition of reaching**

> **heaven; it is attitude toward error which determines our worthiness or unworthiness. One cannot renounce a thing as error until he learns it is an error. There is a difference between being evil and being mistaken. No man is infallible so no one is free from error. We must not equate wrong notions with rebellion against God. One can misunderstand a parent without revolting against his authority. There are some in every party who are dishonest and unjust; there are many who are honestly doing the best they know how to do. None of us know all there is to know about everything; all of us have much to learn. We can learn more readily and help each other more fully, if we will treat one another with brotherly kindness and courtesy. This is the way of love![78]**

Factional Flames

In his essay, "Factional Flames," published in the spring of 1962, Ketcherside quotes the following statement from the "Sand Creek Address and Declaration," issued in August of 1889:

> **All such that are guilty of teaching, or allowing and practicing the many innovations and corruptions to which we have referred, that after being admonished, and having had sufficient time for reflection, if they do not turn away from such abominations, that we can not and will not regard them as brethren.[79]**

He goes on to note that, through the above statement, division within the disciple brotherhood was formalized, and the philosophy of unity through separation was formally adopted by Churches of Christ:

> **This statement in the "Sand Creek Address and Declaration" read in August 1889, was an act of "formal division" according to one of its chief proponents. It was written to "draw a line of demarcation between the**

churches of Christ and our innovating brethren." Endorsed by Daniel Sommer in the north and by David Lipscomb in the south, this became the orthodox position of the restoration protestants. It has now become sanctified by three-quarters of a century of practice and is generally regarded as the will of God. Its repeated application has shattered the restoration movement into numerous rival and antagonistic factions. In spite of its evil fruits of strife and division it is offended by most parties with such zeal that one who dares to challenge it is regarded as a heretic.[80]

After commenting on the effects of the Sand Creek approach to unity, Ketcherside sets out to present his conclusions regarding "the nature and results of that philosophy of brotherhood which has become basic Church-of-Christ-ism in our day."

1. The "Sand Creek Address" was a formal statement of what was believed to be a solution to the problem of innovationism.

2. After being adopted, however, it soon became the criterion for measuring the faithfulness of men.

3. The word of God condemns separation from brethren as a means of implementing the divine will.

4. The philosophy of separation is based upon a false premise, that in any direct encounter between truth and error, truth must inevitably succumb and suffer defeat.

5. The "Sand Creek Address" usurped divine prerogatives and transferred them to fallible men.

6. It is apparent from history that the arbitrary decision to dissolve brotherhood was made with a view to justifying use of the civil courts in property suits.

7. Any theory or system which embodies division among the believers as a necessary part of its constitution

must be both unscriptural and anti-scriptural.[81]

The above conclusions are followed by a list of four effects of the factional philosophy adopted at Sand Creek:

> **1. Since it was the organization of the missionary society which first gave rise to the charge of innovationism many of those who opposed it actually came to exhibit but little interest in proclamation of the gospel to other nations.**
>
> **2. The philosophy of separation produced an unfortunate and spiritually unhealthful attitude toward the sacred scriptures.**
>
> **3. Inconsistency of the most aggravated type characterized all of the factions. This is ever the case when legalism supplants love of truth and when the letter rather than the spirit becomes the canon of approval.**
>
> **4. On the ground of witnessing by withdrawing "The Church of Christ" developed a monastic exclusivism which crystallized it into a narrow and rigid sect.[82]**

To this, Ketcherside adds:

> **As a whole "The Church of Christ" recognizing no brotherhood beyond its parochial limitations has contributed very little to the universal current of religious thought. Its seminaries have concentrated on producing a factional clergy steeped in pedantry. The administrators of these fountains of knowledge have had one eye focused on the Bible and the other cocked at that particular "brotherhood" from which they drew their support. Motivated by fear they have stifled every teacher who was a non-conformist. It became a "kiss of death" for any student to write home that a professor was advocating an idea or interpretation which did not fit the traditional pattern.**
>
> **The products of these schools, growing up in such an**

insular environment, have been incapable of furthering the original purpose of the restoration movement which was "a project to unite the Christians in all the sects." They have had no contact with the flock of God scattered over the sectarian hills. Frequently they do not even know the members of other factions of the movement living in the same city. Thus they have built up confined and illiberal parties in which real freedom to think, speak and act, no longer exists. Although Jesus intended that there should be one community within whose borders men might dwell in harmony despite divergent opinions, the philosophy of separation created a multiplicity of regimented circles in which intolerance is counted a virtue and forbearance is reckoned as a sin.[83]

Ketcherside then contrasts the irenic spirit of J. N. Armstrong, son-in-law of James A. Harding, with the combative spirit of Daniel Sommer— who later came to regret his divisive actions at Sand Creek— in a written debate between the two, held from March 15, 1907, to April 24, 1908.[84]

After quoting from the debate at length, Ketcherside concludes:

> **In the mad surge of factionalism the voices of moderation were drowned out. Those who pleaded for unity despite divergent opinions were branded as compromisers. They were ridiculed as being "soft." Love for the party was substituted for love for mankind. Division became the accepted mode of resolving every difficulty. It was defended and glorified as the will of God. "Gospel meetings" became the excuse for bitter partisan attacks. The advent of radio made it possible for factional orators to dispense their propaganda on a wider scale. The body of Christ was hacked and chopped to pieces under the guise of loyalty to its Head. Humble followers of the Master who could not conscientiously acquiesce in every partisan interpretation were denounced and placed under anathema by those whose moral life could not compare with theirs. The restoration movement, harassed and**

> **hagridden, became the most divided of any religious group on the American scene. The philosophy of separation and exclusivism had burst out in full bloom. The seed planted years before had produced a deadly Upas tree.[85]**

The Longest Prayer

The lead article of *Mission Messenger* for January 1975—the final year of its publication— is titled "The Longest Prayer." The bound volume for that year, titled *One in Christ*, features this article as its introduction. It is an analysis of the prayer of Jesus recorded in John 17. While the prayer is remarkable for many reasons, it is especially significant for what it reveals about the relationship of Jesus's followers to the world and for the request he makes regarding their relationship to one another—in him. Ketcherside notes:

> **Jesus has handed the world a measuring-rod and said, "Take this and use it to judge those who claim to be my disciples." The world has a right to wield that yardstick. The criterion is not one of superior knowledge or of doctrinal correctness. It is simply love for one another. If we love only those who love us we are no better off than publicans or social outcasts.[86]**

While there is much in the prayer that pertains to the relationship of believers to the Father and the Son, of particular interest for this chapter is *the nature of the unity for which Jesus prayed*. That this was not for a unity of thought should be apparent, since the finite knowledge of humans cannot be compared to the infinite knowledge shared by the Father and the Son. In this regard, Ketcherside writes:

> **As human beings apply their minds to God's revelation there will be differences in their deductions and they will never see everything alike! Never! God has made us with diverse mental powers and characteristics as**

varied as our facial features. We can no more all think alike than we can all look alike. Any person who postulates unity in Christ upon uniformity of opinion, interpretation or doctrinal understanding is disseminating division and sowing schism. The only unity possible for men on earth is unity in diversity! There never was any other kind! There never will be any other kind! It is sheer demagoguery to hold out a hope that your faction will some day line up every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that men and angels will cast their crowns down and surrender to the party chieftains.[87]

Toward the end of the essay, Ketcherside takes note of the remarkable type of unity that exists between the Father and the Son and the believer:

Jesus and the Father are one because they possess a divine nature. I do not think men can ever be one as the Father and Son are one until they become partakers of the divine nature. So long as they are under the influence of the lower nature they will gratify the desires of the flesh. They will follow "enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit and envy." It is only when they have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires that they will know "love, joy, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." But cheer up! Do not be discouraged!

The divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness. All of this is through knowledge of Christ who has called us to his own glory and excellence. *By knowing Christ we have life. By experiencing him we have godliness. All of this is the result of a divine power grant.* **Every contingency is covered. Nothing is lacking. There is no fine print. We are called to share in his splendor. We are called to share in his excellence. But there is more, much more.**

The divine grant is even broader in scope. Listen! "By which he has granted to us his precious and very great

promises, that through these you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the divine nature." The fellowship of the divine nature! Sharing the common life of the divine nature! What a mind-boggling thought. But that is the way those who believe in Jesus through the apostolic testimony can become one as the Father and Son are one!

That they also may be one in us! I praise God for this revelation! The only place we can ever be one is in Christ. We will never be one politically, economically, or philosophically. We will never be one racially, socially, or nationally. The only way we can be one is to be in a *state* which transcends all of these, that is, to be in a realm where all of these exist but where none of them make any difference. Every political, economical or philosophical scheme to produce unity is doomed to failure. Every racial, social, national or international program to achieve equality in the flesh will come to naught. Only when men put on Christ, only when they are in him, are they one. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:27, 28).[88]

About Symphonies

Among the last essays Ketcherside wrote on the topic of unity in diversity was one titled "About Symphonies," published in Pat Kilpatrick's monthly publication, *Ensign,* in the fall of 1985. It begins with an acknowledgement that one of the great disappointments of his later life was due to the fact that his brethren were unable to recognize that unity in diversity is "the only option available to thinking men." Although he once viewed unity as a matter requiring doctrinal uniformity, he freely confesses: "I was wrong, just as those who perpetuate the mistake today are wrong."[89]

He then points out:

> **Lesser animals, guided only by brute instinct, may act identically to circumstances which confront them. But thinking men, influenced by memory and directed by rationality, will not be guided by innate tendencies. All of us have been programmed in the past. And all of the ideas resulting from this enter into our choices and help to direct our lives. We do not turn the dial back to zero when we read the Bible. Inherited prejudices, acquired views, and our reasoning about them, enter in and influence our judgment.**
>
> **It is for this reason, I think, that every example and metaphor of the "called out ones" acting together, is one of diversity, of a variety and multiplicity of gifts functioning together to achieve the eternal purpose. Take, for example, the word symphony. It is a transliteration of the Greek *sumphoneo*. It is the word for harmony, concord or agreement. It was first used to designate a musical composition in the early seventeenth century. A symphony consists not of one instrument, but of many. They do not all make the same sound. But they are harmonious. They do not clash or conflict with one another. . . .**
>
> **It is the diversity of instruments playing together which creates the harmony. Harmony is from a remote ancestor *harmos*. It means "a fitting." Although the Holy Spirit did not use them for examples, there are no better illustrations of the original meaning than the watch and automobile. But the Spirit did use the human body. And he began with the concept of diversity. "There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all." The members are not alike. They differ in appearance, arrangement and activity. But they fit together and work in unison. When the hand approaches the mouth with a biscuit dipped in gravy, the mouth automatically flies open. It is a good thing it does.** [90]

With regard to the harmonious working of a diversity of

gifts within the body of believers, Ketcherside points out:

> **Each member has its own usage. Each possesses its own "gift of grace." Neither can say to the other, "I have no need of you." God has set every member in the body as it has pleased him. This ought to create consternation in the hearts of those who have driven brethren out and offered the callous explanation, "We do not need them anyhow." The body is a tremendous example of a functioning unit in which "all members have not the same office."**
>
> **There is no such thing as unity by conformity available to thinking men and women. It is a pipe dream of little minds, a figment of an overwrought imagination, and an ill-contrived illusion unauthorized by the Creator of the universe. And it is a universe because it works together, but it can only do so because of the multi-versity of its elements. God no more made us to all think alike than He did to all look alike. The only people who can approach conformity are those who are mental blanks, and who march in lock-step down the street. Men must first be brainwashed before you can get them to yell "Great is Diana of the Ephesians" for two solid hours.**
>
> **It is a triumph of the ages that men can share in a "unity of the faith" and it is a tribute to the diverse mind that salvation was predicated upon faith rather than upon knowledge. Faith is the belief of testimony. An ignorant, unclad savage from the jungle can listen to the story of Jesus and can believe or reject it, while an elaborate exposition of doctrine and dogma will be as far out of his mental reach as the eagle soaring in the heavens is out of his physical grasp. It is for this reason that preachers in an enlightened and erudite nation have one message while those who deal with jungle tribes have a wholly different one.**
>
> **And every person on this shrinking globe who believes in Jesus with all of his heart and soul, and who**

eagerly seeks to do His will as He understands and knows it, is a child of my Father in prospect or reality. And he is my brother in the same way. For wherever my Father has a child there I have a brother or sister. And I have many more than I used to have. The family is growing larger for me at the same time it is growing smaller for others. But, never mind, one day when the light breaks through the fog which clouds their understanding they will also join in the great family. In the meantime, how they regard me is of little consequence.[91]

For Additional Study

The following is a list of articles by W. Carl Ketcherside that discuss the topic of the current chapter in greater detail. All of Ketcherside's essays are available in volumes 1 and 3 of the *e-book* series *The Works of W. Carl Ketcherside*, accessible on Amazon.com and archive.org.

- **"A Spiritual Adventure."** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1960): 1.**
- **"Incendiary Instruments."** *Mission Messenger* **(January 1962): 1.**
- **"Problems in Attitude."** *Mission Messenger* **(November 1962): 7.**
- **"Wishful Thinking."** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1963): 45.**
- **"The Spirit and Unity."** *Mission Messenger* **(July 1963): 97.**
- **"A Realistic Attitude."** *Mission Messenger* **(August 1963): 123.**
- **"Unity in Christ."** *Mission Messenger* **(April 1966): 65.**
- **"The Unrecognized Unity."** *Mission Messenger* **(April 1965): 59.**
- **"Strategy for Peace."** *Mission Messenger* **(January 1967): 6.**
- **"The Recovery of Reason."** *Mission Messenger* **(February 1972): 23.**

Chapter 11

RENEWAL THROUGH RECOVERY

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Introduction

In 1959, Ketcherside wrote an essay addressed to "people with whom I have chosen to identify myself." His stated objective in the essay was to examine the system known as "The Church of Christ." He then presents what might be regarded, in a larger context, as a summary of the overarching purpose of his mission and message:

> **My thesis is that, generally speaking, it is not a restoration of the primitive church of God, but rather exhibits the nature and characteristics of a party, or sect. My purpose is to arouse those who are members of it to visualize it in its true light, so they may divest themselves of their sectarian tendencies, rise up, and begin anew the restoration program which was abandoned in order to defend the status quo. As it now exists, rent, torn, and divided, "The Church of Christ" can never unite the world. It will complicate, rather than solve the problems of a divided Christendom.[1]**

Six years later, in 1965, upon returning from a speaking engagement in Puerto Rico, Ketcherside discovered that the passenger seated next to him was an iconic founder of a national chain of restaurants— who was also a member of the Stone-Campbell restoration tradition. During the flight, the businessman recounted how he had turned his failing business venture into a success with the development of a distinctive "motto"— for which his company continues to be known. He told Ketcherside, "You have to get a motto. Without a motto you are sunk."

Sometime after the above conversation, Ketcherside devised a catchphrase that he believed would resonate with his readers while accurately encapsulating the essence of his mission and message— a phrase sufficiently comprehensive to describe the overall task by which the inherent unity of believers could be made convincingly visible. But it was not until July of 1967 that

he published his new motto for the first time. The catchphrase by which he came to be identified to his readers for the next twenty-two years was: *Renewal through recovery of the apostolic proclamation, purpose and power*. **He wrote:**

> **It is our conviction that renewal can only come by recapture of that which gave existence to the structure originally. We like the word "recovery" and in the case of the church** *renewal* **comes through** *recovery of the apostolic proclamation, purpose and power*. **The first gives decision, the second direction and the third dynamic. Without the first there would be no start, without the second there would be no objective, without the last there would be no power to carry through to the goal. Confidence, continuation and consummation— these are the three elements of any successful movement.**[2]

In the essay "Restoring a Movement," referred to earlier, Ketcherside provides a brief overview of how every century has produced movements aimed at restoring the primitive order of Christianity. These movements typically arise from reaction and revolution but inevitably gravitate into new sects. The search for truth gives way to the defense of traditional positions, and adherents fragment into parties. A sect creates its own little world and equates it with God's big one. Historically no sect ever returns to a movement status.

However, Ketcherside expresses hope that the movement with which he is associated can defy "the law of sectarian progression." That hope, he insists, lies only in renewal through recovery of the concepts and ideals which launched the movement in 1908. He writes:

> **But free men who have grown up in this background, and have caught the real vision of the restoration ideal, while extricating themselves from the party machinery, can again assert their right and intention to be Christians and Christians only. As such they can spark a movement which will help the whole Christian**

framework to reconsider the values accruing from renewal through recovery of the apostolic proclamation, purpose and power. As a sect we will do nothing but divide Christians into factions; as a movement we may once again become "a project to unite the Christians in all of the sects." Then it can be said again, as it was aptly stated in 1809:

> **We are also of opinion that as the Divine word is equally binding upon all, so all lie under an equal obligation to be bound by it and it alone, and not by any human interpretation of it; and that, therefore, no man has a right to judge his brother except in so far as he manifestly violates the express letter of the law — that every such judgment is an express violation of the law of Christ, a daring usurpation of his throne, and a gross intrusion upon rights and liberties of his subjects.[3]**

In the final article to appear in *Mission Messenger,* **"Hail and Farewell" (December of 1975), Ketcherside once again returns to his central theme:**

> **I do not know what the future holds, but I shall continue to serve actively so long as I am able. I am scheduled more fully for next year than for any year of my life. I shall probably fly more than a hundred thousand miles into every kind of situation. A good deal of my work now is outside of our own movement and consists of bringing the ideal of restoration to those of other backgrounds. I do not generally use the term "restoration" because it has lost its significance for this generation. Instead I plead for renewal through recovery of the apostolic proclamation, purpose and power. The religious world is not looking for restoration but it is looking for renewal. My theme is, therefore,** *renewal through recovery!*[4]

After closing *Mission Messenger***— at a time when circulation was at its peak— Ketcherside wrote numerous essays**

for *Restoration Review,* including a series titled "Renewal Through Recovery." In the third installment of the series, he writes:

> **You will note that genuine renewal begins with proper respect for the apostles. It is *renewal through recovery of the apostolic proclamation, purpose and power.* This is the renewal for which we plead. No other will do for very obvious reasons. I hold no brief for the kind of teaching which assumes that the apostles were a group of antiquated fuddy-duddies whose teaching can be disregarded with impunity. The world has been led down a road of falsity by the infiltration of humanism and it stands a good chance of ending up in a bog or swamp where any attempt to extricate itself will only result in its sinking.[5]**

In other essays, Ketcherside is takes care to define the terms of which his dictum is composed, ensuring that its intended meaning is accurately conveyed. In what follows, his effort to clarify his terms is documented.

Renewal Through Recovery

In a series of seven articles titled "Renewal Through Recovery"— written from 1983–84 for *Restoration Review*— Ketcherside challenges the heirs of the Stone-Campbell movement by calling their attention to the fact that the movement was not of divine origin:

> **We are continually talking in revered tones about "the restoration movement" as if Jesus had died for it and heaven had adopted it as the nineteenth century alternative to the church of our Lord purchased with his own blood. The fact is, of course, that it was a movement in history begun by men, carried on by men, and eventually torpedoed and sunk by men. We know who started it and when. We also know who scuttled it and**

when. It began as a noble experiment. It has ended up as an ignoble expedient. It never affected the world as it could have done. Today it lies bruised, battered and beaten. It has suffered abuse from its own proponents. It lies divided and fragmented by action of those who compose it. It is generally ignored by those who do not.[6]

Like every other human movement, it has aged and grown senile under the weight of its traditions. However, Ketcherside argues that this should not be a cause for concern. He explains:

> **I have long since distinguished between the body of Christ which was set in motion in Jerusalem nineteen centuries ago, and the restoration movement begun by men in America in the early part of the nineteenth century. If the latter breathes its last gasp and expires it will have no appreciable effect upon the former. The world has ceased to talk or think about restoration in our day. I can understand that. It has been led down so many devious trails by "restorers" and sold so many bills of goods by promoters that it has sat down in the middle of the road and refuses to budge. The church is looking for renewal. Words such as restoration and reformation have lost their meaning and forfeited their validity and integrity.**
>
> **I grant you that the movement toward renewal will be like other movements. One day it also will become outdated. It will be supplanted by something else. Ever so often there is a stirring in the mulberry trees of men's souls. There comes a great awakening. A movement begins and touches even obscure lives. No one knows how or why it happens, because it originates with the Spirit of God. Men do not begin revivals. They are caught up in them. God begins them. Men give form to them. They order them. They name them. But the rivulets which run together to make the river, and the freshets which combine flow through channels which God opens up.[7]**

Ketcherside then suggests that it is time for another

"breakthrough of the Spirit"— *Renewal!* He contends that God does not want his people merely attending meetings and listening to canned sermons. He wants *them* to be *living* sermons. Regarding many of the discourses delivered from pulpits each week, he remarks:

> **We are spectators at a sacred wrestling match where a glib speaker ties an opponent, who is absent, into knots. We wrestle against flesh and blood. Why do we act this way? The reason is simple. It pampers the pride of the speaker and the ease of the beholders.**
>
> **We need to be renewed. We are not soaring on wings like eagles. We are like fledglings afraid to leave the nest. And some of us have been in it for forty years. Even our pin feathers are undeveloped. We are like chickens with their wings clipped. We cannot even fly over the wall which encloses us. Let there be a new movement to unite the saints and let it begin with us. Renewal through recovery— of the apostolic proclamation, purpose and power. That will be our watchword. Print it on our banners. Fly it from our flag poles. Write it on our hearts. Engrave it upon our foreheads.[8]**

In the second installment of the same series on "Renewal Through Recovery," Ketcherside states:

> **I think all of us know what we mean by renewal. It does not mean to create, to invent, or promote something new. It assumes the previous existence of the thing to be renewed. It also predicates the departure from the state which should be maintained, and the recovery or restoration of that condition.[9]**

It is Ketcherside's opinion that the heirs of the movement have been lured into using the methods of the world in their striving for success. He continues:

> **As a result they have erected rival buildings in choice spots, lavishing millions of dollars upon their own comfort**

which might have been used in better things. Caught up in the "cathedral-complex" they have pridefully sought to outdo one another and their rival steeples rise in every wealthy suburb as an indication of their "love for Jesus."[10]

He then observes:

And the lives of many who perform what they call "acts of worship" at such places are as empty and devoid of consecration as the aisles and halls of the structures when the custodian turns out the lights and locks the heavy doors with their dead-bolts. It is essential that such lives be rescued from the useless round of making pilgrimages to holy places and engaging in vain and repetitious prayers. Singing four or five songs per week, and listening to a harangue about some theme will no longer pass for the Christian life. Our spirits have to be rekindled. Our hearts have to burn within us. We have to remove the bushel baskets from our lights. We have to long for good as a deer longs for a stream of cool water.

Now this transformation can only be wrought in us by the Holy Spirit. To be controlled by the Spirit results in life and peace. Where there is no Spirit there is no life. We have been betrayed by our mentors. They have convinced us that the only Spirit available for us today is the word. The more of the Bible we know the more the Spirit dwells in us. He who cannot read or write cannot have the Spirit. He who carries the Bible in his pocket has the Spirit in his jacket. It is time we put an end to this falsehood. It is just not true. It never was true. It has resulted in joyless, complaining, griping, unhappy and dissatisfied lives. It has also resulted in "double lives" as men have tried to live above themselves, and have always fallen victims of their own pretensions, landing on what the Word calls "the dunghill" of life.

We have also been flim-flammed into believing that the Spirit worked among the primitive saints, and later deserted them and left them to go it alone. So we have been

condemned to go stumbling along, devoid of the Spirit and still trying to grasp and keep the peace that only the Spirit can produce and confer. There has never been a time when the family of God existed anywhere on this earth that the Spirit was absent from it. Each of us must possess the Spirit, live by the Spirit, and be guided by the Spirit, or we have had it. If we would be renewed we must begin by asking God to fill us with the Spirit. There is no other way. It is either this or spiritual death—a slow, lingering, tortuous death from which there is no hope.

It is not enough for renewal that you have the Spirit, but the Spirit must have you! There is a difference. You must recognize that you are "sold out" to God. All you have, all you are, all you ever hope to be, are His. As the divine potter He can mould you at will. You have died and your life is hid with Christ in God. Your real life is Christ. You began all this with God's Spirit. And you cannot complete it with the flesh. You cannot finish under your own power. You cannot wait for others. You have no right to expect of them what you are unwilling to risk yourself.

Renewal through recovery! Recovery has to do with that which has become lost. We recover a body from a stream, or a document from the files, or a diamond ring from the garbage can in which it was inadvertently dumped. One who is sick recovers his lost health. One who lost in a poor investment recovers the money which had "gone down the drain." We must admit that we have lost some values of the faith or we will never reclaim them. So long as we mislead ourselves into believing that we have it made, that all who will be saved must come to us, we will continue our downward path to the end.[11]

In 1977, two years after he ceased publication of his monthly journal, *Mission Messenger*, **Ketcherside began to write occasional articles for** *Ensign*, **edited by R. L. (Pat) Kilpatrick, of Huntsville, Alabama. In 1985, in "Renewal Through Recovery," Ketcherside wrote:**

> **Renewal can only come that way— through recovery of the apostolic proclamation, purpose and power. The apostles occupy a unique place in the kingdom. They sit on twelve thrones judging. The message they proclaimed changed a pagan society. Their purpose brought purpose to a purposeless culture. They brought power to humanity lying prostrate in powerless frustration. And that same proclamation, purpose and power will transform our decadent age. It is the only thing that can do it. Nothing else can— nothing![12]**

Just two years before his death in 1989, Ketcherside wrote a series of four articles on recovery through the apostolic proclamation, purpose and power. They appear to be among the last he ever wrote on the subject— with the exception of the "unfinished essay" at the end of this chapter. In the article preceding the series, "Let It Come," Ketcherside states:

> **The time is drawing near for a new reformation. It must begin with the hearts of men. It must be projected with genuine love. It will be augmented by men who are more interested in the cause than in personal gain. Let us move forward to gather up the sincere and consecrated ones. They need not be asked to join anything. They may be better off not doing so. It is joining organizations, many with the best intentions, which has produced all of the narrow sects which war against one another. Forgive us, dear Lord. Let men be free![13]**

In the first of the four essays mentioned above, the path to a "new reformation," according to Ketcherside, was to be "Through Recovery." He writes:

> **Reform is defined as to make better by removing abuses. It comes from *re*, again, and *formare*, to form. Restore is to bring back to a former or original condition, to put back in a former place or position. It is from *re*, again, and *staurare*, to make firm. Actually there is no real difference. A thing restored is one reformed. The**

argument was a contrived one. It was a squabble over mere words. And there is no more useless feud in which one may engage. It satisfied only those who wanted to fight.

The term renew is new. Fortunately there has not been sufficient time to involve it in mental gymnastics. That remains for the next generation. I like the term. It literally means "to restore to a former or sound condition." There is no question but what the faith has been manhandled by the many who have carelessly dealt with it. Sectarianism has treated it quite unkindly. Humanism has directly attacked it. It demands that we not only defend that part of it that we still have, but that we work to preserve it as it was in the beginning.[14]

Renewal, he concludes, must start with what is taught:

Thus, the proper place to start renewal is with what is taught. I think the community can be renewed by recovery of the apostolic proclamation, purpose and power. As I look at those three words my heart beats faster. Renewal through recovery? There is no other way. A weakening or neglect of any of these three means a lopsided community. A proper recovery of all three means a thriving growing group of believers, imperfect individually, but perfected as one.[15]

He then concludes that the next reformation will consist of a rallying around the cross:

May I suggest that the next reformation will consist of a renewal of the cross. It will be again "In this sign, conquer." Everything else will be placed in proper position. Men will no longer look at college degrees as a triumph. They will see them for what they are— the triumph of one man's mind over circumstances. The things men see will be the shame, the brutality, the ignoring of the cross. Men will gather to it. It will become the rallying standard, the utter hope of suffering, bleeding,

dying humanity. Lord, hasten the day![16]

The Apostolic Proclamation

On April 7, 1969, Carl Ketcherside addressed what he described as "a distinguished group of men and women assembled in the Braun Room at The Divinity School of Harvard University." In describing the meeting, he says:

> **The meeting was opened by Don Clark, who presented Barry Willbanks as moderator. Three reactors to my thesis were then introduced: Dr. Krister Stendahl, Dean of the Divinity School and John Lord O'Brian Professor of Divinity; Dr. William Robert Hutchison, Charles Warren Professor of History of Religion in America; and James Valentine Fisher, Ph.D. candidate. The last named was of special interest since he is the son of my good friend and brother, G. C. Fisher, Retired Chaplain of the Air Force, through whose kind invitation I conducted a Week of Spiritual Emphasis upon the largest air force base in the United States.**
>
> **My theme was "Toward A Conservative Ecumenism," and I had resolved to present a positive alternative rather than a negative approach to the ecumenical drive in our generation. Accordingly, I broke the prayer of Jesus down into four components, and analyzed these on the basis that any form of unity which did not answer this prayer could not be called *Christian* unity.**
>
> **My first point dealt with the *extent* of the unity for which we seek. Since the prayer for oneness was to include all who believed in Jesus through the apostolic proclamation (*kerygma*), it was my contention that any approach to an answer must be based upon two considerations— the centrality of Christ and the instrumentality of the apostles. My thought was that both occupied a unique place in the kingdom constituency and**

to overlook or negate this uniqueness would be abortive of the will of God.

As to the nature of the unity, I suggested that it was personal, rather than organizational or institutional, and that it stemmed from possession of the divine nature, thus was a work of the Holy Spirit, transforming the individual from within. Such unity cannot result from plans, programs or projections, nor be produced by concordats, creeds or conventions. Men are powerless to either create or destroy it.

As to the place of the unity, my contention was that it was in the fellowship with the Father and the Son. It is useless to unite all men if, in the process, you separate them all from God. In dealing with the purpose of unity I pointed out that Jesus made belief in himself contingent upon the oneness of his disciples. The world will not be won to believe in Christ, until those who believe in Christ in the world are one.

In summation I stated that renewal is not the creation of something new, but the recapture of the ideal of the new creation. Renewal can only result from recovery of the apostolic proclamation, purpose and power.[17]

Again, in his 1967 essay, "The Restoration Principle," Ketcherside acknowledges that those whose values have been shaped by a post-Christian era will have little concern for renewal, unlike those whose outlook is shaped by their belief that Jesus is seated at the right hand of God:

If we believe this is a "post-Christian era" we will be little concerned with renewal for we will not consider that there is anything vital which needs to be renewed or recaptured. But if we believe that Jesus is now seated at the right hand of God and will continue to sit there until the last enemy is destroyed, we will recognize that the Christian economy must exist throughout the

Christocracy, that is, until he turns the kingdom back to the Father. I believe this.[18]

Renewal, he goes on to say, is not the restoration of anything but the recapture of the message from heaven, which was focused on a person, not a book:

> **Renewal does not mean the restoration of any congregation of bygone days, not even the first one at Jerusalem. It means the recapture of the importance and relevance of the message from heaven and a seeking to know its meaning. There is every evidence that the community of saints at Jerusalem was produced by *whom* they knew, rather than by *what*, or how much, they knew. We are in the same position since we also are caught up in the human predicament.**
>
> **Our hope of heaven is not at all dependent upon being free of error, but upon having a correct attitude toward truth. It is not contingent upon knowing truth perfectly, but rather upon knowing Him who is perfect Truth. We will not reach heaven, because of a way of life but because we have the life of the Way. Our task, then, is not to restore dead congregations to life, but to be restored to the Living Word so that we may have life. The congregations had their day and departed. The Word of God endureth forever. It outlasts heaven and earth. It also outlasts the congregations upon the earth.[19]**

In the same essay, Ketcherside responds to possible objections to his thesis regarding renewal through recovery. In this regard, he quotes an unidentified "eminent scholar," who put it this way:

> **"Our concept of our mission, our plea as a people, is such that many will cry, 'If restoration goes, must not everything go?' . . . Yet I am convinced that the principle is no longer tenable in any meaningful form to those who take seriously the findings of modern biblical and theological scholarship; I believe the principle to be not**

only untenable but pernicious, a stumbling block to sincere Disciples on the pathway to the renewal of the church and the recovery of its unity in Christ."[20]

To the above, Ketcherside responds:

> **What are the objections to renewal through recovery of the apostolicity set forth, as we believe, in the new covenant scriptures? It is argued first that this is going backward contrary to all laws of growth in any organism. This would come with greater force if those who offered it acted with some consistency. Some, for instance, in the field of polity, are preparing to adopt the episcopate, or diocesan bishopric, in order to secure union. They are willing to go back to where the church departed but not willing to go back to where it started. With them, the sin is not in going back. Rather it is in [not] going back to the ambassadors of Christ.**
>
> **What is wrong in going back to the source of power? If a line is short-circuited you cannot just go on from there and ignore it. You must retrace your steps until you locate the impediment between your present position and the dynamo. And when you find the stumbling block you should not adopt it as the normal condition but act to remove it.[21]**

It is further argued, according to Ketcherside that the restoration approach "quenches the Spirit" and "keeps Him from being ongoing in revelation." In this regard a brother wrote:

> **We would want to point out that the church is more than 'passing on historical revelation'; indeed, it is that plus the continued revelation of God in the midst of our own time. For, we cannot but believe that the Holy Spirit is still working and that this is the manifestation of God in our modern times.[22]**

Ketcherside replied:

We also believe that the Holy Spirit is still working and active but we do not believe that he is revealing the will of God as he did to and through the apostles and prophets. Our brethren overlook the fact that the admonition to not quench the Spirit was given to those to whom the revelation was addressed and not to those to whom it was directly given.

The Spirit produces unity which we must maintain, but those who profess to be recipients of modern revelations, have so many different and varied views that they add to the confusion rather than to the peace of the one body. Since God is not the author of confusion, we must conclude that these diverse views and ideas are not the fruit of the Spirit. It is easy for one to convince himself that what he desires is what the Spirit wants him to have, and he may confuse the spirit of his will for the will of the Spirit.

The apostolic message provides a consistent, uniform and regulated approach to the problem of unity, and we must never forget that he who prayed that we might be one was talking only of those "who believe in me through their (the apostles') word." We should at least allow him to define and describe those whose unity he desires. 23

Incidental to his thesis, Ketcherside points out that true unity is that of the Spirit.

It is this unity which must be maintained in the bond of peace. It is expressed in the revelation given by the Spirit. Our task is not to discover a way to achieve unity but to recover and receive the unity which God bestows. To do this we must vault over all of the forms, structures and divergent theological interpretations, and recover the simple proclamation, the kerygma, the Good News, as the basis of our oneness.

Every person who responds in God's own way to

God's own gospel is made a member of the one body, and is thus united to all others on earth who make the response. These will be varied in degree of knowledge, temperament, disposition, social status and race. Still they will be one— not in these things but in Christ.

That which is not a condition of unity at its creation can never be made a condition of unity in its continuation. This means simply that as there was diversity in arrival at unity there must always be unity in diversity. But that diversity must not be in relation to the person or identity of Jesus for it is in this fact that our unity becomes reality.[24]

The question is then raised as to what the relationship of those in Christ is to be toward the apostolic proclamation as revealed in the epistles of the new covenant scriptures. To this, Ketcherside responds:

Every person who submits his will wholly unto Christ thereby submits himself wholly to the will of Christ. This involves three things: an attitude of respect for the apostolic word; an intention to ascertain the meaning and implication of that word for one's own life, and the implementation of that word in one's own life and conduct.

All of this must be done in perfect liberty without any compulsion except that created by the lordship of Jesus. This liberty must be the prerogative of all of the saints which means that error must be allowed to remain self-correcting under the three rules of involvement. The members may share their divergent views of doctrine but may not sever themselves from one another over them, for this would violate the will of Christ as regards schisms and schismatics, or factionalists. They may correct but cannot coerce; they may discuss but not disrupt the relationships. Differences must always be grounds for discussion but never for division.

Brotherhood must be maintained in love. This is the prime consideration of the restoration principle, for if all else is restored and we lack this, we are still nothing. Regardless of what gifts we may hope to recover this remains the more excellent way. It follows then that we should concentrate our immediate effort upon the recapture of the spirit of mutual love which transcends honest differences in understanding. This tends to place all else in proper perspective.[25]

Regarding the "apostolic proclamation," Ketcherside lists seven items that he considers valid for the recovery of God's design for the community of saints in our day:

1. Each congregation is free under God to order its own affairs and conduct under the lordship of Jesus, and is not amenable to the direction or discipline of any other community, or combination or coalition of communities.

2. The offices of the community are functions and not honorary or titular positions. They simply fill needs growing out of the nature of the community, and those ordained for them are selected by the community in which they serve. This provides a bulwark against a developing ecclesiasticism, a constant threat!

3. The greatest function is to be one of several bishops in a local community and it is a flagrant corruption of this function to create one bishop over several communities.

4. The Lord's Supper is the public exhibition of fellowship in the one body and the table should be set for every baptized believer whose moral conduct does not render him unworthy of Christian association, in spite of divergencies of opinion or degrees of knowledge.

5. The several communities may refer to themselves by any term of designation used in the sacred scriptures, but may not bind this term upon any other congregation, nor exalt it to the position of a sectarian title.

6. Congregations of saints may cooperate together in such projects as they mutually agree upon, but may not require or demand that other congregations enter into such cooperative endeavors, and should not create such structures as will inhibit or destroy their own autonomy. Communities of saints which combine their resources to carry on a certain work cannot censure such communities as choose to abstain, nor can these latter censure those who enter. Each congregation, as each member, must stand or fall to its own master.

7. Love, as the crown of all virtues, must govern in all areas of spiritual life, and love for the brotherhood must include every brother on earth. Love for those who constitute a party or sect, with discrimination shown against the great body of other believers, is a burlesque upon the Way, and constitutes hypocrisy and Pharisaism of the most damnable kind. [26]

Among the four essays published in *Ensign* by Ketcherside in 1987, is one titled "The Proclamation," in which he shows that what the apostles proclaimed was the good news— the gospel. And we must recognize that reproclaiming it is our task. He writes:

The word "proclamation" occurs only twice in the new covenant scriptures. It is found more times in the previous revelation. Jesus makes good use of it in Luke 12:3. It is compared with the cry or announcement of a herald. In those days there was no radio or television set over which to make announcements. Victory or defeat in battle was proclaimed by a herald. The old covenant scriptures frequently speak of proclaiming a fast.

Every town had an official who was elected to serve as the crier of news. Frequently he had a place elevated above the plain, upon which he stood and made official announcements. Sometimes he went through the streets ringing a bell to get attention, and following with an announcement. It is no wonder the apostles were hailed as

heralds. They announced news— good news— to the world. In the Anglo-Saxon world it was called "gospel." None of us can announce the gospel to the world. It has already been announced. "Their voice has sounded all over the earth, and their words to the bounds of the inhabited world" (Rom. 10:18).

We can reannounce it. We can reproclaim it. We must recognize that as our task. We are not original heralds. We are secondary. The community of believers is constructed upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. It was by a revelation that His secret was made known to Paul. Through it he could understand the secret of Christ. In former generations this was not disclosed to the human race. Now it has been revealed by inspiration to His dedicated apostles and prophets. Through the Gospel the Gentiles are joint heirs with the Jews. They are part of the same body. They are sharers together in the promise made in Christ Jesus. This is the Gospel. We can tell individual Gentiles that they are included.[27]

He continues:

When Paul came, he resolved that while he was with them he would think of nothing but Jesus Christ— Christ nailed to the cross. The Gospel he proclaimed did not sway the Corinthians with subtle arguments. It carried conviction by spiritual power. Their faith was not built upon human wisdom but upon the power of God. It is that Gospel, that proclamation we must seek today. It is not the pampering of wealth, an appeal to scholastic ability or a call to human pride. It is the simple, down-to-earth good news. This can be told to most anyone— and by most anyone on earth.[28]

The Apostolic Purpose

In September 1983, the sixth installment of Ketcherside's series of essays on "Renewal Through Recovery" was published

in *Restoration Review*. It is here that he deals specifically with the apostolic purpose, the recovery of which he regarded as requisite to the recovery of apostolic Christianity. He points out that the word "purpose" comes from the Latin *pro*, before, and *ponero*, to place. "It refers to that which one places before himself as a goal to be reached, or an aim to be accomplished."[29]

Continuing his analysis of the present status of the project to unite all Christians in all the sects, Ketcherside concludes that the community of the saved ones in our day have turned things over to the ecclesiastical machine to run:

> **They have little, if any personal interest in what happens. They are spectators, on-lookers, bystanders. More and more the manipulators turn the meetings into spectacles, going all out to present a highly organized, cleverly arranged performance with the preacher as ring-master, the conductor, the impresario. The Establishment takes care of everything. It hires, fires and regulates. All the members are expected to do is to show up for the exhibition, contribute as directed, and not rock the boat, or make waves by criticism.[30]**

Our problem, says Ketcherside, is that "We have forfeited our purpose. We are letting empty buckets down into empty wells."

> **If we would seek renewal, and we had better seek it, if we expect to survive, we must recover what we have lost — our purpose, the apostolic purpose. Voltaire called the Frenchman La Harpe "an oven which was always heating, but never cooked anything." We run frantically here and there, looking for this program or that, borrowing schemes, stealing ideas, appropriating methods, but never fitting them into a definite purpose. We must develop a strategy for the faith which is adapted to succeed. We are not playing around. God has not called us to a picnic.[31]**

Ketcherside raises the question of what our purpose should be. He then writes:

Whatever it is, it must become an obsession, an overwhelming, breath-taking, life-shaking, way of life dedicated to the pursuit of the Holy Grail, the search for the Golden Fleece, the hunt for the river of golden sands. Every other thing must somehow be fitted into it, every other feature must be related to it. The apostolic purpose was the divine one. It was the God-purpose. The Father made everything one in the cosmic creation. But Satan fragmented and splintered it, like a madman hurling a rock through a lovely mirror. God is not to be deterred from his place. Everything must again become a unit. He must be all in all.

In one paragraph in the "letter of the mystery" Paul defines his purpose in an outpouring of words which remind one of a dam bursting and releasing the pent-up waters. Listen! "For he has made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of his will, according to the purpose which he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth." Have you ever heard a more all-embracing statement? Consider the words will, purpose and plan, and ponder their implications for the called-out of God. What is his will? What is his purpose? What is his plan? Will has to do with determination, purpose has to do with declaration, plan has to do with design. All three of them are directed toward the unity of all things.[32]

Ketcherside then observes that the purpose and plan of God originated in heaven and was not revealed as a result of human wisdom or insight.

This is not a dream. It is not a fantasy. It did not come by rationalization but by revelation. He made it known. It originated in heaven and not on earth. It came from God and not from man. And it was made known in all wisdom and insight. It was not to be a noble experiment or a test tube case. It is not the result of a trial in a great laboratory. He is the only-wise God and his wisdom is behind it. He is insightful and all of his pragmatism is

poured into it. That which was a mystery, unheard of, undreamed of yesterday, is a reality today. The mystery is made known.

That mystery made known has to do with his purpose. It is set forth in Christ. Until Jesus came and died the mystery was hidden and concealed. It could not be declared. Now it is seen to be a plan for the fulness of time. Time is not eternity which never fills. It is a measure of life on earth. And when time reaches a certain point all things will be united. How this will be brought about we do not know. What we do know is our part in it, and that part constitutes our purpose, as it did the purpose of the apostles. In the midst of a world set at odds by Satan we have lost that purpose. We no longer think of the "one body concept" except in conjunction with our specific sects.[33]

In concluding the essay, Ketcherside insists that no existing group is exclusively the body of Christ on earth.

No sect is the one body, and the one body is not a sect. The body is not a conglomerate of sects and all of the sects together do not constitute the body. The body is composed of individuals, working together, sharing in unison, functioning as a unit. And the achieving of that unanimity of purpose must be our purpose. If we can see each other as fraternal helpers through the eyes of love, rather than as rivals through the eyes of envy, we will set the stage for the unfolding of the drama of the ages. No one who truly believes that Jesus is the Son of God is an enemy of any other person who truly believes that. No such one is an enemy of God.

In the past we have been unable to sort our foes from our friends. The reason is because of our early training, environment and discipline. We have been taught to think sectarian. And one who thinks sectarian will be sectarian. Our exclusiveness, forced upon us, kept us from association with others on the spiritual level, and we have

never been able to properly evaluate them upon that level. Because of our rural and small town heritage we were thrown together in school, in our home life, and in business. We came to appreciate the honesty, the sincerity, the uprightness of others. But they were members of "another church" and we did not associate with them on the level of the Spirit. We were aloof, isolated, and even sometimes downright rude. All of us recall relatives who put us to shame when it came to good works, but they were Baptists, Methodists, or members of the Assembly of God. We cooly ignored them.

It will create a trauma for some of us to move toward the one body, composed of every saved person on earth. Fear will grip us. We will stand in dread of God's avenging wrath. That is because of the thorough "brain-washing" to which we have been subjected by Satan. He is afraid we will make it work. And I think we have him nervous now because of talking about it. Nothing else is quite as dangerous to the kingdom of darkness as the unity of the children of light. Satan will employ preachers to act as a "fifth column." They will use the age-old weapons of threat, boycott, pressure, and excommunication. But God's purpose, will, plan and pleasure will and must be accomplished. The eternal years of God are with us. Let us move out. Let us go forward![34]

Another of the four articles by Ketcherside, published in *Ensign* **in 1987, was titled "Purport and Purpose." Here he muses that although we cannot know for sure what Paul might say were he to address an epistle to a modern city like Chicago or Boston, there is one thing we can know.**

He would never forget his purpose in the world. It was his life. It was the reason for being. It was directly connected with his purport. That is an interesting word. The last syllable has to do with the work of a porter. It relates to carry. The word means literally "to carry out." It means "to carry about." And Paul never forgot that he was God's porter. He bore the message of salvation to men. That was

his purpose. And "hope sprang eternal in the human breast."[35]

He then states his conviction that we face another reformation, one that may end up wiping all of our sects and parties off the face of the earth. But it will relate to purpose.

The truth must be preached. It must be propounded with the proper purpose. The right objective counts!

Paul's method was illustrated when he wrote to Timothy, "I adjure you by His coming appearance and His reign, proclaim the message, press it home on all occasions, convenient or inconvenient, use argument, reproof, and appeal" (2 Tim. 4:1, 2). In the chapter previous he shows that proclamation is not enough. He says, "But you have followed my teaching, my conduct and my purpose in life, you have observed my faith, my patience, my love, my endurance, my persecutions, and my sufferings." In the great seven-hilled capitol of the world, in the beautiful Athens, in the banking city of Pergamos, or the medical center of Thyatira, Paul pressed his message home.

He proclaimed it with purpose! What would he do in modern Saint Louis? Would he be written up in the Post-Dispatch? Called a religious zealot? Blasted as an interfering babbler? Arrested? Thrown in jail? With whom would he become close friends? The mayor? The aldermen? The Blacks? The Whites? The rich? The poor? Would he choose to live among his fellow-Jews in the richest part of town? Or with the homeless who walk the street all night, talking to themselves?

If he came in a few years later he would find conditions a lot better. There's a great day coming! I do not refer to the invention of faster planes, or more accurate missiles. I'm talking about matters that pertain to the soul. Things of which we have robbed our inner consciousness. God will again show that this world's

> **wisdom is foolishness. There will be those who want miracles for proof. There will be those who look for wisdom. But as for us, we will proclaim the crucified Christ. He is both the power and the wisdom of God.[36]**

While men have invested in discovering the source of destructive power in the universe, the real source of spiritual strength has been neglected. Ketcherside continues:

> **Yet, it is not too much to admit that the ability to win wars by destroying men's bodies is not equal to rescuing them from death to serve the living and true God. It will readily be admitted that at least two things are essential— the proclamation of His will and the proper aim or motivation. Not only must the good news be proclaimed but it must be sent forth with the purpose for which it was intended. Otherwise, it will deflect from acceptance of it. An obedience which reflects from improper motives is one which will end in disaster.[37]**

Finally, he concludes with the following admonition:

> **Do you believe in prayer? I mean "really believe in it"? I urge you to start to pray for the consolidation of God's design. It is coming. It will come with or without our prayers. But with the children of God beseeching for it, asking and pleading for it, it may come sooner than expected. let us entreat God to hurry it along. Some of us will not be here to see it unless it comes soon. And let us have purpose for wanting it— God's purpose. Bless His holy name![38]**

The Apostolic Power

In 1984, in the seventh installment of his series on "Renewal Through Recovery, Ketcherside provided a brief overview of the changes that took place during the first three centuries in the history of the church. While political powers, operating on the motto that "might makes right," left behind a

trail of agony and despair, the other, operating on the motto "right makes might," gave up their lives freely by the power of the Spirit, which vanquished the wisdom of this passing age. It was a power that no mass of marching men could resist.[39] He continues:

> **Today we look back upon the dewy freshness of the *ekklesia*. And we wonder what has happened. Let us wonder no more. It is apparent. The power has gone off. . . . Once they shown as lights in the world, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. They were like a city on a hill, a beacon beckoning in every direction. Then the power went off.**
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> **It did not go all at once. It gradually ebbed away as other things than Jesus became the center. Everyone was still in position. They were going through the motions. They were singing songs, offering prayers, delivering homilies. But no one was listening. They were not even listening to themselves. Bible studies became diatribes. Prayer meetings were excused to do everything but pray. Blackness settled upon hearts. The works of the flesh became more manifest. Depression was felt. People dropped out and could give no reason except that their needs were not being met. And still the merry-go-round kept turning. It went ceaselessly on as if it knew no stopping. And that's where we are now. The world of mankind passes gaily on its way and leaves us mired in the sticky clay of indifference with our wheels spinning.[40]**

But, Ketcherside interjects, there is a solution.

> **We must recapture the apostolic power. It was this which enabled men to look tyrants in the face without flinching, to face beatings which left their flesh hanging in strips and the bones exposed, to look death in the face as they confronted the whitened fangs and fetid breath of angry snarling beasts in the arena. It was this which enabled them to die daily. It was promised to them before "he went back to glory." He opened their minds to understand the**

scriptures, because the burden of that which is written is only understood by open minds. It can never be fully grasped by minds which are closed by tradition, selfishness or hatred. How he opened their minds we cannot tell, but we do know that he immediately said, "Thus it is written." And then he recounted again the fact of his death and its effect.

He told them that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached among the nations. Not just to the Jews, but to the Samaritans, the Romans, the Greeks, the barbarians. The preaching should begin at Jerusalem because that is where they were. It should always begin where we are. Where we are is our Jerusalem. But it must never stop there, either with them or with us. Then he told them something very significant. I am not sure they fully understood it. I am not sure most of us fully understand it. "You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send the promise of the Father upon you, but stay in the city where you are until you are clothed with power from on high."

They could not be witnesses until they had power from on high. There are two kinds of power. One kind everyone has. So Peter said, "Why do you stare at us as though by our own power we had made him walk?" Such power does not qualify one to be a witness of spiritual things. Natural events can be substantiated by natural power. Supernatural events require supernatural power. That is, power from on high. It is part of the promise of the Father. Men must wear it like a suit of clothes. It surrounds them. It keeps them from being naked.

At his ascension he said "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." A witness without power is an anomaly. But the divine dynamic, the exceeding energy which drove them into all the world of their day in spite of hardship and hunger, of pounding and persecution, of death and destruction, was from on high. It animated and

vitalized the body. The flesh profited nothing. The thing that counted was the mission. And before they died they could take the words of the psalmist about the starry heavens, and appropriate them to themselves. "Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world."

This was not the result of their working in God. It was the result of God working in them. There are three passages in Ephesians which are pregnant with power. One is found in chapter 1, verse 19. "And what is the immeasurable greatness of his power in us who believe, according to the working of his great might." Three of the rich Greek words for power are found in this tiny verse— *dunamis*, *energeia*, *ischus***— dynamic, energy and strength. They are immeasurable. Even in these days of computers they are still beyond us, still in the great "out there." But they are actually resident in one who truly believes. Let your mind feast again upon the superlatives of this verse. They are available unto us.**[41]

Ketcherside then summarizes.

Those who worship the power of the human mind can never admit that anything happens in them which they did not originate, or over which they exercise no control. These are the modern gnostics. They are true humanists and thousands of them profess to be Christians. But there is a power at work within us. It is immeasurable. It is great. It is mighty. It exceeds our ability to verbalize, to sermonize, or to put in words. It lies in a realm beyond our thought processes. It is "far more abundantly" able to provide a dynamic than we can ask, dream, envision, fantasize, or think. No wonder Jesus said, "I will not leave you orphans." No wonder he declared that the other Counselor, would dwell with us, and be in us. Praise God for the Other Comforter.[42]

The final mention of Ketcherside's catchphrase in *Ensign* **was in 1987, in an essay titled "The Power of God," in which he**

writes in a prophetic tone:

> **As time passes on restorations, reformations, improvements, and alterations, all take place under divine direction. It is about time for another. Men tend to corrupt those which have taken place. They sectarianize them. They have to be purged. The one to come will be in the nature of renewal. It will be brought about by recovery of the apostolic proclamation, purpose and power.[43]**

Of the apostolic power, which he identifies as the power of the Holy Spirit, he writes:

> **That power has been eroded. It has been sacrificed. It has been forfeited. In any God-given attempt at renewal it must be re-established. It must invest the purpose. It must give life to the proclamation. It cannot be used to make human pride register. It dare not be employed for a demonstration of human ability. It is the divinely-appointed power which operates through the gospel— the preaching of the cross to them that perish!**
>
> **Slowly, but with increasing speed, we are traveling toward the encounter of the greatest fact of history with all else we have known. That fact will reveal once and for all the tremendous power of the cross. It was here that God and man met. It is here they must meet again. False systems will be seen as false, the wild ruses of men will crumble and fall, the vain imaginations and the cruel idols of men will perish. And as we now face the fog and doubt of the uncertain future we can only say, "Hasten the day, Lord, hasten the day!"[44]**

An Unfinished Essay

In 1988, Carl Ketcherside filled seven pages of a lined stenographer's pad with an essay that was left unfinished for reasons unknown. I discovered it about ten years ago in a box of his personal effects, on loan to me by his daughter, Sue Burton.[45]

Ketcherside opens the essay by stating, "Almost thirteen years have passed since I ceased publishing Mission Messenger," thus dating the essay sometime prior to December 1988. The year is further confirmed by another statement toward the middle of the essay in which he writes, "I began life eighty years ago," which was in 1908. The fact that he says, "we live in an apartment" would further date the essay to a time prior to the passing of Ketcherside's wife, Nell, in August 1988. When I last spoke with Carl by phone, he was at Oak Hill Chapel, to which his library had just been relocated in preparation for their move from their house to an apartment. I had earlier called his home and spoken to Nell. She told me where to reach him. All of these statements and events seem to indicate that Ketcherside wrote the essay sometime between July and August of 1988, about ten months prior to his death in May of the following year.

While the "unfinished essay" may not be the last Ketcherside ever wrote, it does appear to be the last in which he mentions the catchphrase "renewal through recovery of the apostolic proclamation, purpose, and power." It also provides details never before revealed about the person who encouraged him to devise such a motto.

A transcription of the essay, which includes Ketcherside's own corrections, penciled over the lines of the original manuscript, appears below. A copy of the original, handwritten document may be found online in the "Ketcherside Collection" on the Archive.org website.

*** * * ***

> **Almost thirteen years have past since I ceased publishing Mission Messenger. Significant changes have been made in our humble way of living. We sold the house which we built and in which we had lived for twenty years. It was difficult for Nell to turn her back upon it and drive down the hill. For the first time since we were married, we live in an apartment. Everything is so convenient. Stores,**

shops and restaurants are in walking distance, but we never walk to them. Even the hospital is close.

My books created the library at Oak Hill Chapel. Our furniture is in a room dedicated to the prayers of the saints. Everything seems to have worked out to the glory of the Lord. A very little while before we moved, I located a building in the inner city. It had been a tavern throughout its history. A house of prostitution was run in conjunction with it. Someone had tossed a bottle of burning oil through the window. It went up in flames. One of the women, who was drunk, burnt to death. I got hold of the owner and persuaded him to fix it up. He did so and made a very attractive place of it.

We began gently enough but increased the opportunities as they became available. At present we have a Sunday morning meeting, one on Saturday for the boys and girls from five to twelve, and baseball and basketball for boys off the street on Friday evenings. There is clothing give-away Thursdays, Bible Study on Wednesdays, and clothes sorting on Mondays. We permit welfare and citizen's groups to meet in the building regularly.

The Cornerstone, as we call it, has become a haven for many of the homeless. They know that there they can find understanding and rest. They are loved and cared for. None is treated as unworthy. We have paid their rent, telephone, gas and electric bills, and they appreciate this, although some are not as careful as they might be in their usage of these. This is as good a time as any to admit that the Cornerstone has done more for me than I have been able to do for anyone else. Through it I have met some of the best and closest friends I have. The fact that their clothing is tattered and torn, and dropping off, has little to do with their character.

We have been there five years. It seems incredible that it should be so long. In that time seven people have been shot to death within three blocks of the place. Much of the violence has been the result of drug-inspired

incidents. We keep pressing on, believing that, as we teach and live, we will affect the community. The last two years it has been altered. Japanese, Chinese, Thailanders, and Filipinos have moved in from the land of their origin. Polish, Bohemian, Russian and Italians have come. A great many blacks have infiltrated the neighborhood.

We are unfortunate that we are right in the midst of a high sexual crime area. Prostitution is rife. But we have seen some of the perpetrators won to Christ and we rejoice in this to His glory. The fact is that the Cornerstone has been as great a blessing to me as it has to anyone. I love to work with the brothers relieving needs— physical, mental, and spiritual. We have a "big brother" program in which one of our men takes a deprived youngster and works with him to bring him up in his understanding. It is just great. Praise God!

I began life eighty years ago, on Sunday morning, in the home of a miner and his wife. Father had been to the third reader. Mother could not read at all. She had worked in the field during her childhood days. There, in a little two-room cabin which was hot in the summer and cold in the winter, I grew up. God has made it possible for me to travel throughout the world, telling the message of His salvation. As I think back it seems impossible that it should have happened. But if it happened to me it could to anyone.

I am somewhat frightened by my many mistakes. For one thing I limited the kingdom of heaven too much. I thought of it as something that could be restored by man. I now realize how inadequate that concept is. I no longer believe there was a "church" in God's program for men. I apologize for the time when I thought there was. A "church" has an office. It has officers. It has those who speak, perform rituals, and create increase superficially. A body develops naturally. As every member works it works, performs and grows.

Until the year 1611, Jesus said, "Upon this rock I

will plant my assembly." When King James, of England, had his way, Jesus was alleged to have said, "I will plant my church." Since that time almost seven hundred churches have arisen, each one claiming that it is the one he planted, and that all of the others are fakes. The fact is that none of this is true, even though I once believed, and even preached it, God forbid!

With the coming of the Second Great Awakening in American history, Thomas Campbell, a quite humble Presbyterian, sat down in an attic and wrote a memorable paper. I have called it "the greatest uninspired document in history." I did that when I did not understand it. Now that I think I do I believe it even more strongly. It was submitted to his son, who concurred in it. It was not a means of dividing, but of uniting people across all party lines.

It represented only the thinking of one man's mind. It was much like Martin Luther's writing about salvation by faith. It was like John Calvin's dissertations, or those by John and Charles Wesley. Every one of these was misinterpreted by his followers and so was the one by Mr. Campbell. It may be too late to regret that what each wrote could not have become the basis of discussion as friends and brethren. Now a lot of people think it is too late. I am not one of them. I realize how difficult it will be to discount the fightings, the rage, the expressions of disgust for 180 years but I believe the time is fast coming when it will happen.

The Lutheran Church has divided into various groups. So have the Presbyterian and Methodist churches. But so has the "Church of Christ." This is proof that the "Church of Christ" is of human origin. It is not the body of Christ. It is a very firm conviction of mine that this is true. God's people are a scattered flock today. But they are a united group so far as He is concerned. And there is every evidence that they will come together in His divine love. It will be more difficult for some of them than for

others. I am praying for it, lovingly and sincerely.

I have been attending prayer sessions at the Presbyterian and other groups lately and they have come a long way. I continuously tell them what Colonel Sanders told me coming back from San Juan, Puerto Rico. "You have to get a motto. Without a motto you are sunk, just as I was until I came up with 'Finger Lickin' Good.'" So I tell them that I adopted "Renewal through recovery of the apostolic proclamation, purpose and power." That's quite a mouthful for them to recall but it says it for me! Everywhere I have spoken folks have picked up "Renewal through recovery" and gone with it!

The fact is that most congregations are losing members in these days, some of them quite rapidly. They do not know what to do about it. St. Louis is a Catholic town. The last few years there has been such a sloughing off of members and candidates for the priesthood that it is noteworthy. Within less than a mile of where I live is Kenrick Seminary. Twenty-five years ago it was crowded. Now it is closing down and selling out. Large homes and condominiums are going up on the site.

The conditions cause frantic prophecies that the faith of Jesus is receding. That is foolish. Jesus said of his congregation that "the gates of hell should not prevail against it." It is just true that men are no longer being fooled by a pseudo-faith. Our ears are constantly assailed by stories of Jesus coming because He has run out of steam. Just as in the year 1000 A.D. people sold their homes and possessions and assembled upon the mountains to await His advent, so with the coming of the year 2000, virtually the same thing is being urged.

If He wants to come praise His name. But I do not get excited about it. God has not finished with our world yet. The harvest is ripening as well as the tares. It is a great prospect which faces the Christian. I am told that one country after another is forbidding the presence of missionaries. Forget it! People from every such country

line our streets today. Convert them and allow them to return home with the message. God is bringing together people from all over the world for us. We no longer need to leave our land and go to a part of the earth which provides hardship and sacrifice. We can talk to Japanese, Indians and Chinese. We can testify to Muslims,

For Additional Study

The following is a list of articles by W. Carl Ketcherside that discuss the topic of the current chapter in greater detail. All of Ketcherside's essays are available in volumes 1 and 3 of the *e-book* series *The Works of W. Carl Ketcherside*, accessible on Amazon.com and archive.org.

- **"Church of Christ Party."** *Mission Messenger* **(December 1959): 1.**
- **"The Restoration Principle."** *Mission Messenger* **(July 1967): 98.**
- **"Renewal Through Recovery, No. 1."** *Restoration Review* **1 (January 1983): 11.**
- **"Renewal Through Recovery, No. 2."** *Restoration Review* **3 (March 1983): 54.**
- **"Renewal Through Recovery, No. 6."** *Restoration Review* **9 (November 1983): 173.**
- **"Renewal Through Recovery, No. 7."** *Restoration Review* **1 (January 1984): 216.**
- **"Renewal Through Recovery."** *Ensign* **3 (March 1985): 46.**
- **"Through Recovery."** *Ensign* **8 (September 1987): 143.**
- **"Purport and Purpose."** *Ensign* **10 (November 1987): 183.**
- **"The Power of God."** *Ensign* **11 (December 1987): 203.**
- **See also the 1979 doctoral dissertation of Stanley McDaniel, "Renewal Through Recovery of the Apostolic Proclamation, Purpose, and Power: The Invention of W. Carl Ketcherside." At the time of this writing, it may be found on the website, unity-in-diversity.org; it is also included in the "Ketcherside Collection" on the archive.org website.**

POSTSCRIPT

Main Menu

One day in 1952, I was with my father as we drove along Ann Street in Montgomery, Alabama, on our way to the Panama Street Church of Christ. A member of the church was traveling with us. As we passed the campus of what was then Alabama Christian College, one of the adults remarked, "Carl Ketcherside has gone off the deep end." Since I was only six years old at the time, I had no idea what the statement meant or to whom it referred. Nevertheless, I never forgot that incident or the name *Carl Ketcherside***.**

Late in 1970, I had just returned from La Paz, Bolivia, where my plan— since age fourteen— to do mission work in Latin America had ended abruptly after only one month in the country. Shortly after my arrival in Bolivia, I became convinced that the presuppositions upon which my ultra-conservative, non-institutional Church of Christ upbringing rested were flawed, and I began to search for answers.

Within a few weeks of my return to the U.S., I was sitting in the home of Carl and Nell Ketcherside at 139 Signal Hill Drive in St. Louis. Having read several issues of *Mission Messenger***, to which someone had anonymously subscribed me just prior to my departure for Bolivia, I was hopeful that Ketcherside might have answers I had not found in the works of other contemporary writers within the movement. That visit marks the point at which my journey of faith took a decisive and significant turn.**

For the next nineteen years, I was in frequent contact with Carl. My letters were always promptly answered, and his were always enlightening and encouraging. The last time I saw him was in Arab, Alabama, in the early 1980s. The last time I spoke to him was by phone in 1988. He was at Oak Hill Chapel, to which his personal library had been relocated. He and Nell were moving to an apartment at 4420 Jamieson, 1-C, St. Louis, MO 63109. It was to be the final residence of their earthly sojourn. I called to tell Carl that we had just published several of his books on a multi-version Bible on CD-ROM, one of the first of its kind.

Over the years, I read nearly everything Carl wrote and listened to dozens of audio and video recordings of his speeches. And while I read him critically— as I do almost everything— I always found his understanding of scripture to be balanced and well-researched.

When I first saw a copy of *Mission Messenger* in 1970, I rejected it outright. I knew Ketcherside was not "one of us." Furthermore, since we had "all the truth," he necessarily had to be wrong. But by the time I returned from Bolivia, my understanding of scripture no longer supported my earlier thinking. Yet I could find no scriptural way out. So, I began to reexamine my previous training.

Upon examining Carl's writings in late 1970, I found them to be of value because he seemed to understand the point of view under which I had been struggling, having been there himself. Furthermore, I discovered that he knew how to walk me out of the labyrinth of legalism in which I had been raised, since he spoke the language I understood. But he did it by the Book— one verse at a time. Otherwise, his message would never have resonated with me.

As I cautiously followed Ketcherside's thinking, I became aware that he was showing me clearly how to unlock the shackles of misinterpreted scripture that had kept me bound to a

type of conscientious factionalism— one in which my understanding of a few passages of scripture seemed to require that I separate from those with whom I disagreed. While it took years for me to assimilate all that Carl had written, I eventually came to understand how the movement of which I was a part— which aspired to bring about visible unity through a restoration of the ancient order of things— had become one of the most divided and divisive groups in all of North America.

Perhaps of greater importance, I came to understand that Jesus had not come to give us a new religion but to give us new life— the very life of God— conveyed to us through his Spirit, by which he strengthens us with the power of his divine love. It is by the power of that love that we are enabled to overcome evil and do the good works for which we were designed as part of his new creation.

It was the impact upon my life of what I had learned through Ketcherside's tutelage that led me to aspire to share with others— especially my children and my siblings— the things Carl had shared with me. He not only had discovered the point at which we ceased to be a unity movement, but he put his finger on the source of scriptural interpretations that had come to support a radical deviation from our historical roots.

Over the past five decades, I have attempted to share some of Carl's conclusions with members of Churches of Christ with which I was associated. One such attempt, in the early 1980s, resulted in my being withdrawn from by the Church of Christ where I was a member. My family and I were subjected to a "withdrawal sermon" in which a false account of my thinking was presented to the congregation without any opportunity for me to respond. Earlier conversations had already made it clear that none of those present understood what I was saying in the essays I had shared with them. A high school principal later apologized for agreeing to withdraw from me, admitting that had he understood me at the time, he would not have cast his

vote against me.

I learned from this and other experiences that mentioning the name "Ketcherside" within Church of Christ circles in any tone other than derogatory was almost certain to result in my being ostracized. People with whom I had been close in the past no longer called on me even to offer thanks for the food we were about to share.

At the time of this writing, I am unaware of any Church of Christ within a radius of 150 miles of where I live that would allow me to teach a Bible class or serve in any other capacity, although I spent the better part of the last two decades in a college classroom teaching Bible to students who, for the most part, had never owned one. Rejection of this type, however, is to be expected as long as I continue to speak favorably of Carl Ketcherside and against the hermeneutic of unity by division. But "Here I stand; I can do no other."

After years of studying the works of Carl Ketcherside, along with those of hundreds of other writers— including those of divine revelation— I can hardly claim any of my thoughts as original with me. In that regard, I find the words of Alexander Campbell, written nearly two centuries ago, to be reflective of my own thinking:

> **I could not enumerate or particularize the individuals, living and dead, who have assisted in forming my mind. I am some way indebted to some person or other for every idea I have on every subject. —Alexander Campbell, "Letter to William Jones, No. 5,"** *Millennial Harbinger* **(July 1835): 304.**

ENDNOTES

Main Menu

Chapter 1: Introduction to W. Carl Ketcherside

1. Related to me by Ketcherside during a visit to his home in St. Louis, in late 1970.

2. W. Carl Ketcherside, *Pilgrimage of Joy: An Autobiography of Carl Ketcherside* **(Joplin: College Press, 1991), 51; Kindle edition (SCM e-Prints, 2010), Loc 755.**

3. W. Carl Ketcherside, "A Non-Partisan Faith," *Mission Messenger* **(August 1967): 118.**

4. W. Carl Ketcherside, "The New Covenant," *Mission Messenger* **(September 1960): 10.**

5. Ketcherside, *Pilgrimage of Joy***, 19, Loc 209**

6. These quarterlies, laid out like a print document, contained original poetry, sketches and "articles" written by Ketcherside in his impeccable handwriting.

7. The journal was published, often irregularly, from 1926 through 1952. It was renamed *Spiritual Call* **in August of its final year of publication.**

8. E. M. Zerr et al, "The 'ROUGH DRAFT:' Its Sponsors— Also Its Outworkings— Why We Are Against It," *Macedonian*

Call **(October 1932): 5.**

Below is the line following the title of the article, where Ketcherside's name appears:

Read and Signed by: E. M. Zerr, W. E Ballenger, Wm. Ketcherside, Ben F. Huddleston, Edward Buttram, C. R. Turner, D. H. Cuppy, A. C. B. Honn, W. G. Roberts, W. Carl Ketcherside, Eugene Suddeth, Wm. Freeman Jones, Roy E. Clark, H. C. Towles, H. W. Cuppy, L. C. Roberts— Many other preachers, elders, leaders and others, who did not have the opportunity of reading it, voluntarily said that we could use their names but we have confined the names to those only who have read it."

9. Ketcherside, *Pilgrimage of Joy*, **91, Loc 1410.**

10. W. Carl Ketcherside et al, "A Defense Against The Supreme Effort of The Apostolic Review to Crush Carl Ketcherside, D. A. Sommer and The Macedonian Call," *Macedonian Call* **(December 1934): 5.**

11. Ketcherside, *Pilgrimage of Joy*, **93, Loc 1444.**

12. Ibid., 219, Loc 3564.

13. This count is based on a combination of electronic searches and a visual inspection of each page of the journal.

14. I have not been able to find anything in print that would account for the alienation, other than Ketcherside's own comments.

15. W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Common People," *Macedonian Call* **(July 1947): 6.**

16. W. Carl Ketcherside, *Pilgrimage of Joy*, **"St. Louis, Here We Come!" 93, Loc 1455.**

17. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Messenger Now Streamlined," *Missouri Mission Messenger* **(January 1945): 2.**

18. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Statement On Conviction," *Missouri Mission Messenger* **(July 1945): 2**

19. Ketcherside, *Pilgrimage of Joy*, **146, Loc 660.**

20. Ibid., 87, Loc 1336.

21. Ibid., 46–47, Loc 665.

22. From a statement by Leroy Garrett, writing under the pseudonym *Theophilus*, **we have an indication of the number of churches who adhered to the position set forth in the Sand Creek declaration at mid-twentieth century: "There are upward of 300 churches among us in this country that will not tolerate the pastor system and that make it as much a question of fellowship as they do the organ." —Theophilus, "How About the One-Man Hired Pastor?"** *Bible Talk* **1 (October 1952): 13.**

I might add that the identity of the pseudonymous writer, "Theophilus," is revealed here for the first time. In a phone conversation with Leroy Garrett, near 2011, he confirmed my suspicion that he was, indeed, the long unidentified *Theophilus*. **During the time the pseudonym was being used, incorrect conjectures as to his identity were frequent.**

23. W. Carl Ketcherside and Rue Porter, *The Ketcherside-Porter Debate* **(Barnard, MO: Rush Printing Co., 1937), 5.**

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid., 20–21.

26. Some years later Ketcherside devoted the entire issue of *Mission Messenger*, for January 1954, to dealing with "a clergy caste operating under the guise of 'located evangelists.'" Leroy Garrett had done the same with the March 1954 edition of *Bible Talk*.

27. W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Lord's Supper," *Mission Messenger* (February 1948): 6.

28. This information was conveyed to me in personal email from Ketcherside's children, Jerry Ketcherside and Sue Burton.

29. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Women's Work," *Missouri Mission Messenger* (March 1946): 7.

Ketcherside here quotes the book by D. A. Sommer, *The Church of Christ,* (Indianapolis: Octographic Review, 1913), 182.

30. Ibid.

31. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Reply to John Allen Hudson," *Mission Messenger* (February 1950): 8.

32. Carroll Kendrick, *Live Religious Issues of the Day* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Publishing Company, 1890), 64.

33. Ibid., 68.

34. W. Carl Ketcherside, "For This We Plead, No. 4," *Mission Messenger* (September 1952): 3.

35. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Restoration Thoughts, No. 10," *Mission Messenger* (November 1954): 5.

36. While Garrett appears to have shared Ketcherside's views on the evils of racism and segregation, his first reference to such is not until December of 1955, in an article titled "Salvation Is of the Jews." Here Garrett wrote:

"The whites delight to see the blacks saved, but to sit around the Lord's table with them or to have them in the eldership of the "white" church is something else. Many a white saint will dig down into his pocket for a donation to the "Nigger church" down across the tracks, but that in no wise means that such ones are ready to commune with the blacks. Most Christian colleges will not admit a Negro. . . . No colored folk allowed in this institution that upholds Christian principles." —Leroy Garrett, "Salvation Is of the Jews," *Bible Talk* 3 (December 1955): 40.

Garrett further remarks:

"Our religious journals will identify some churches as "Colored" and some preachers with the same appellation. One paper among us has "The Colored Page"— all for Negroes. Ah, what charity, what an example of Christian love! Will it take the edict of our Supreme Court to get us to do what Jesus has already told us to do?" —Ibid.

In *Bible Talk* for November 1957, Garrett makes similar observations in his article, "I Can Prove That The Church of Christ Is A Sect."

The reader should note that the unspeakable "N" word was commonly used at the time Garrett was writing, both as a pejorative and, in this case, to shame those who so used the word. *— Editor*

37. W. Carl Ketcherside, "The One-Man Pastor System," *Mission Messenger* **(September 1950): 2.**

38. In the final issue of *Mission Messenger*, Ketcherside reflects

on views he held earlier in life

"I still hold most of the views I have always held. I think they are valid. Certainly they are for me. I did not change my position on things but merely altered my views as to who constituted my brethren." —W. Carl Ketcherside, "Hail and Farewell," *Mission Messenger*, (December 1975): 182.

39. The dates of Ketcherside's first trip abroad are February 20–May 9, 1947. Details may be found in the January and February issues of *Mission Messenger* for 1947. An additional article may be found in June of that year. Travel logs of the trip are titled "Day by Day— On Our Way," and may be found in the following issues of *Missouri Mission Messenger*: (June 1947): 1; (July 1947): 1; (August 1947): 1; (September 1947): 1.

40. The Hartford church later served to receive and disburse funds contributed to Ketcherside's trip abroad.

41. see Nell Ketcherside's travel-log in the appendix to this volume.

42. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Home Again," *Missouri Mission Messenger*, (June 1947): 1.

43. Ketcherside, *Pilgrimage of Joy*, 122, Loc 1879.

44. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Our Trip Abroad," *Missouri Mission Messenger* (February 1947): 13.

45. W. Carl Ketcherside, "The End of the Commandment," *Mission Messenger* (March 1951): 3.

46. Ibid.

47. Relevant documents by Ketcherside in *Mission Messenger*

are: "To Work in Ireland" (November 1950): 10; "The Ireland Work" (December 1950): 10; "Work in Ireland" (January 1951): 7; "Off For Ireland" (February 1951): 10; "Diary from Ireland" (March 1951): 3; "Diary from Ireland" (April 1951): 5; "Diary from Ireland" (May 1951): 8; "Diary from Ireland" (June 1951): 6; "Diary from Ireland" (July 1951): 5. Also, the following sections from chapter 4, "The Beginnings of Change," in *Pilgrimage of Joy*: "Irish Stew," "The Knock at the Door," "Life in the Spirit," "The Land of the Thistle," and "Back Home from England." All quotations in this section are taken from the above accounts.

48. W. Carl Ketcherside, "To Work in Ireland," *Mission Messenger* (November 1950): 10.

49. "Sue," as she is known to most, or "Sharon," as her brother Jerry calls her, would marry Curtis Burton the following year (March 2, 1952).

50. Ketcherside, *Pilgrimage of Joy*, 174–75, Loc 2801.

51. Ibid., 177.

52. Ibid., 178, Loc 2861.

53. Ibid., 179, Loc 2889.

54. In his autobiography, Ketcherside states that: "It occurred on the afternoon of March 27, 1951." His travel log for that date states: "I was up early this morning to film the parade of the Juvenile Orangemen."

55. Ketcherside, *Pilgrimage of Joy*, 180, Loc 2898.

56. W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Common Life," *Mission Messenger* (February 1975): 21.

57. **Ibid., 21–22.**

58. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Diary from Ireland (3),"** *Mission Messenger* **(May 1951): 3.**

59. **Although Ketcherside and Garrett come from different segments of the Stone-Campbell tradition (Garrett from the "mainline" tradition and Ketcherside from "Sommerite" churches), their initial affinity was based on a similar understanding of the manner in which the church was to edify itself and a shared opposition to institutions established for the purpose of preaching the gospel and teaching the Bible.**

60. **Ketcherside,** *Pilgrimage of Joy,* **198, Loc 3221.**

61. **This letter, together with others written from Ketcherside to Garrett over the years, may be found in the archives of the library at Abilene Christian University. A copy of this letter may be found in the appendix to this work.**

62. **Ibid.**

63. **Due to its significance in the life of Carl Ketcherside, the complete text of "Alabama Meeting" appears below:**

"The editor spent four days in Winfield, Alabama, Oct. 6–9. The primary purpose of the visit was to discuss points of agreement and disagreement with various gospel proclaimers. Winfield was selected as the locale for the discussions because Bro. Leroy Garrett, of Dallas, Texas, was there engaged in a tent meeting. Other brethren who assisted were Carroll Wrinkle, Cleveland, Tenn.; Clifford Yeldell, Bastrop, Louisiana; Bernard Haygood, Greenville, Ala.; and Barry Throckmorton, Tuscumbia, Ala. (now a student in David Lipscomb College). Bro. G. A. Dunn, Sr., of Dallas, Texas, sat in on the discussion for a brief period the first day.

"The canvassing of views with open Bibles in hand occupied ten or twelve hours daily, with mutual growth in grace and knowledge. After additional study and research by all concerned, prayerful consideration of controverted issues will be resumed in Texas in two months, God willing. Perfect agreement was reached with regard to the salaried one-man ministry system and modern institutionalism which threatens the church. The editor was privileged to speak three nights to responsive and friendly audiences, and received numerous invitations to visit congregations in the area for work in the future. It is not expected that these visits will materialize after the clerical hierarchy becomes aroused and clamps the diocesan boycott upon the sincere but subservient churches in the area.

"We consider Leroy Garrett a "prince in Israel." He is an accomplished student, a clear thinker, an effective speaker, and a seeker after truth. While we held differing concepts upon some issues, I feel that my life was enriched by the many hours of contemplative study with him and the fine group of consecrated brethren who joined us in this intensive exploration of Scripture." —W. Carl Ketcherside, "Alabama Meeting," *Mission Messenger* **(November 1952): 6.**

64. W. Carl Ketcherside, *Pilgrimage of Joy*, **"The Cow Pasture Debate," 198, Loc 3230.**

65. Quoted in Leroy Garrett, "To Brother G. C. Brewer," *Bible Talk* **1 (October 1953): 15**

66. Ibid.

On the first night of the "Cow Pasture Debate" near Paragould, Arkansas, where Ketcherside met Garrett for the first time, Ketcherside prefaces an excerpt from an article by Garrett in the *Apostolic Times*, **saying: "I do not think that anyone will say that Leroy Garrett is a Ketcherside-ite." Following the excerpt,**

Ketcherside notes: "I agree with Brother Garrett because Brother Garrett agrees with the New Testament."

On the second night of the debate, Ketcherside introduces another statement by Garrett in the current issue of the *Times*: "Now I want to read from Brother Leroy Garrett. Brother Garret, I think, is one of the most brilliant men, from a scholastic viewpoint, in the brotherhood today." Following the quotation, Ketcherside observes, "That is one of your own brethren. That's Brother Garrett speaking, Brother Wallace." —G. K. Wallace and W. Carl Ketcherside, *Wallace-Ketcherside Debate* (Longview, Washington: Telegram Book Company, 1952), 22–23, 79.

67. The letter referred to may be found in the appendix to this volume.

68. Garrett, "To Brother G. C. Brewer," 15.

69. Leroy Garrett, "Ketcherside and Garrett," *Bible Talk* 3 (December 1954): 46

70. Leroy Garrett, "The Reciprocal Force of 'One Another' in the New Testament," *Bible Talk* 9 (June 1954): 152–53.

71. Ketcherside, *Pilgrimage of Joy*, 216, Loc 3504.

72. Letter from Ketcherside to Garrett dated August 9, 1958.

73. The *Mission Messenger* series, "That They All May Be One," began in January of 1956 and continued through September 1957.

74. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Diary from Ireland," *Mission Messenger* (March 1951): 3.

75. Ketcherside, *Pilgrimage of Joy*, 194, Loc 3145.

76. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "For This We Plead, No. 1,"** *Mission Messenger* **(June 1952): 7.**

77. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "For This We Plead, No. 2,"** *Mission Messenger* **(July 1952): 4.**

78. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Name of the Bride,"** *Mission Messenger* **(April 1957): 9.**

79. **Ketcherside, "For This We Plead, No. 2," 5.**

80. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Common Life,"** *Mission Messenger* **(July 1962): 10.**

81. **Such doctrines would be those related to things like acapella music, baptism for the remission of sins, weekly observance of the Lord's Supper, a presbyterian form of church government, and the correct name of the church.**

82. **Roy Loney, "What About Fellowship,"** *Mission Messenger* **(May 1951): 1: "We are forbidden to fellowship those who are wrong in doctrine or life."**

83. **Leroy Garrett, "Are We the 'True Church' While All Others Are Sects?"** *Bible Talk* **10 (September 1956): 154.**

84. **Leroy Garrett, "This Question of Fellowship,"** *Bible Talk* **1 (October 1956): 3, Loc 21925.**

85. **Ibid.**

86. **This shift is further seen in one Garrett's lead articles in the fall of 1957: "I Can Prove That the Church of Christ Is a Sect,"** *Bible Talk* **2 (November 1957): 18.**

87. **Letter from Carl Ketcherside to Leroy Garrett, dated December 18, 1956. On file at Abilene Christian University library.**

88. **Ibid.**

89. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Common Life,"** *Mission Messenger* **(February 1975): 21.**

90. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Recovery of Reason,"** *Mission Messenger* **(February 1972): 26.**

91. **Ketcherside,** *Pilgrimage of Joy***, "Years of Change," 210, Loc 3400.**

92. **Ketcherside's last confirmed public debate was with William Taylor on March 7–11, 1955. See W. Carl Ketcherside, "Another Debate,"** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1955): 13.**

93. **Ketcherside,** *Pilgrimage of Joy***, "The Change Continues: Lava From Above," 219, Loc 3358.**

94. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Law and Love,"** *Mission Messenger* **(January 1957): 13.**

95. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Grilling the Editor,"** *Mission Messenger* **(February 1957): 2.**

96. **Ketcherside, "That They All May Be One, No. 2," 10.**

97. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Class Controversy,"** *Mission Messenger* **(June 1957): 3.**

98. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "No Party Man,"** *Mission Messenger* **(August 1957): 13.**

The original quote by Robert Richardson may be found in his *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell***, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1868), 353–354; Kindle edition (Stone-Campbell e-Prints, 2024), Loc 4878 where Richardson quotes Campbell "in an address after sermon at the house of Mr. Buchanan:"**

"Am I asked," said Alexander Campbell . . . "why I am not a party man? or why I do not join some party? . . . I dare not be a party man for these reasons:

"1. Because Christ has forbidden me . . . .

"2. *Because no party will receive into communion all whom God would receive into heaven*. **God loves his children more than our creeds, and man was not made for the Bible, but the Bible for man. But if I am asked by a partisan, Could you not join us and let these things alone? I answer, no, because— [***italics added***]**

"3. The man that promotes the interests of a party stands next in guilt to the man that made it. . . .

"4. Because all parties oppose reformation. They all pray for it, but they will not work for it. . . ."

99. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Special Offer," *Mission Messenger* **(September 1957): 14.**

100. Ketcherside, *Pilgrimage of Joy*, **"The Change Continues: Years of Change," 208, Loc 3370.**

101. Ketcherside, *Pilgrimage of Joy*, **"Lava From Above," 220, Loc 3577.**

102. W. Carl Ketcherside, "A Spiritual Adventure," *Mission Messenger* **(March 1960): 2.**

103. Ibid., 12.

104. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Commandos I Have Known," *Mission Messenger* **(June 1969): 87.**

105. Ketcherside, *Pilgrimage of Joy*, **117, Loc 1819.**

106. The first use of this phrase appears to have been in "W. Carl Ketcherside, "Restoring a Movement," *Mission Messenger* (October 1967): 158.

It was inspired by a conversation he had with the founder of a national chain of restaurants on a return flight from Puerto Rico, where they had both attended the World Convention of Churches of Christ. His traveling companion, who was also an heir of the Stone-Campbell restoration movement, related how devising a slogan had finally brought him success, after a long string of business failures. Although this story was told to me by Ketcherside himself, he relates the incident in an "unfinished essay," included in this work, which was discovered posthumously in a collection of his personal archives.

107. Stanley McDaniel, "Renewal Through Recovery of The Apostolic Proclamation, Purpose, and Power: The Invention of W. Carl Ketcherside," PhD diss., Indiana University, May 1979.

108. This column, in which news items from churches and individuals were consolidated in a concise format, ran from February 1955–November 1975. It was preceded by "Among the Churches" (January 1940–December 1944), "What's Doing in the Churches," (January 1945–October 1945), "Missouri Miscellany" (January 1945–March 1946), "This and That from Here and There" (July 1946–December 1954).

"Messenger Service," from 1957–1975, has been reproduced in its entirety in Volume 2 of the e-book series, *The Works of W. Carl Ketcherside*.

109. The following are samples of this sentiment taken from *Mission Messenger*:

"The clergy system has been with us for centuries but has made

little impact upon the world at large for the simple reason that it has been apart from the world of mankind, speaking its own theological jargon which is not understandable to the man in the street." —W. Carl Ketcherside, "Clergy and Laity," *Mission Messenger* (January 1960): 13.

"Such an approach requires a certain kind of ecclesiastical jargon which makes it unintelligible to the average person like myself." —W. Carl Ketcherside, "On Being Naïve," *Mission Messenger* (February 1963): 25.

"The entire religious spectrum of today is affected by virtue of the theological jargon which has developed and which makes the Christian system a mystery, unassociated with the life and thought of the average person." —W. Carl Ketcherside, "Our History and Our Division," *Mission Messenger* (January 1964): 10.

"Again, we face the task of rescuing the Way from the specialized theological jargon which has been developed and adopted by the institutional church, and which reduces it simply to a modern mystery cult, as seen by the average person." —W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Reconciling Community," *Mission Messenger* (August 1967): 116.

"In these days of theological gobbledy-gook and ecclesiastical jargon some preachers can talk English and still speak in an unknown tongue. Jesus did not say, "Feed my giraffes," but "Feed my sheep." —W. Carl Ketcherside, "Speaking Unto Edification," *Mission Messenger* (November 1967): 169.

"The vocabulary which makes use of a great many expressions cast in the modern theological mould and which are seldom heard among us. I have learned that if I am to communicate meaningfully with these men that I must understand their terminology. Ordinarily we do not talk about Christological anthropology, naturalistic objectivism, idealistic subjectivism, or

eschatological development. But if we are to reach men we must go where they are, linguistically as well as geographically. It has helped me to realize that Paul became all things to all men with the highest motivation and with Spirit approval." —W. Carl Ketcherside, "One Day of Life," *Mission Messenger* **(March 1968): 43.**

"I must confess that I am not too "sold" on what is commonly called theology, and I am not sure that you could run fast enough to enroll me in a course on 'systematic theology.' I really doubt there is such a thing. But men in the seminaries all seem to have an acute case of the 'ologies.' This probably stems from an attempt to ape the professional jargon of scholastics who learnedly discourse on such themes as embryology, biology, zoology, anthropology, and cosmology." —W. Carl Ketcherside, "About Theology," *Mission Messenger* **(March 1972): 33.**

"It [Christendom] is the realm of ecclesiastical jargon, that language of the Scholastics, which has become a dialect or patois, unintelligible to the masses and serving only to confuse the uninitiated and confound the humble student." —W. Carl Ketcherside, "What Is Christendom?" *Mission Messenger* **(April 1972): 54.**

"Theology is a person. He is the man on the white horse "and the armies of heaven followed him.' That is why I am no longer concerned with the distillate of men's minds, caught and bottled and labeled and put in rows on seminary shelves. It is silly to talk about the theology of God, the theology of the Spirit, or the theology of salvation. It is sillier yet to listen to the professional jargon couched in such terms as the pneumatic theology, eschatological theology, or soteriological theology. In reality there are no such things!" —W. Carl Ketcherside, "One Lord," *Mission Messenger* **(August 1974): 119–20.**

"We are not concerned with ascertaining the theological explanation of the words we discuss. Professional theologians,

like professional attorneys, professional doctors, or professional pharmacists, have developed a specialized jargon which the uninitiated cannot understand. Nothing is more confusing to the average person than a book on theology filled with the pedantic and pompous gobbledygook which delights the professional clergyman." —W. Carl Ketcherside, "What is Justification?" *Mission Messenger* **(November 1975): 161.**

110. The reader is encouraged to examine those articles for a better understanding of how leaders of traditional Churches of Christ have perceived the author's thinking. The articles are available in the "Ketcherside Collection" on the archive.org website. Also included in that collection is an article by J. D. Thomas, "Brother Ketcherside's New Fallacy," which appeared in the issue of *Gospel Advocate***, for January 31, 1963, and was reproduced in full in the April issue of** *Mission Messenger* **of that year.**

111. W. Carl Ketcherside, "About Orphan Homes," *Mission Messenger* **(December 1951): 13.**

112. The individual responsible for room assignments related to me in a phone call that Ketcherside and Lemmons were intentionally assigned to share the same room.

113. Ketcherside, *Pilgrimage of Joy***, 310, Loc 5120.**

114. This same stylistic and attitudinal metamorphosis is particularly apparent in audio recordings of his speeches from that same period.

115. In his "Introduction" to Ketcherside's autobiography, Leroy Garrett wrote: "The most significant single event in Carl's life during those last years was his attendance in 1983 at the International Convention of Itinerant Evangelists in Amsterdam, Holland. His enthusiasm for this conference is

indicative of the changes that God had wrought in his life through the years, and is reflective of the contribution he was able to make to his own people. If the experience back in 1951 in the little church in Belfast had liberated him from sectarianism, the world evangelism conference in Amsterdam in 1983 confirmed his commitment to the church catholic. It was a rare ecumenical experience for a man who had been years preparing himself to appreciate it." —Ketcherside, *Pilgrimage of Joy*, **16, Loc 172.**

116. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Right On!" *Mission Messenger* **(October 1970): 150.**

117. In the December issue *Mission Messenger* **for 1972, Ketcherside wrote:**

"Sometime ago I began to meditate upon what course I should pursue with regard to MISSION MESSENGER. Long ago it was decided and announced that it would not be perpetuated beyond my decease. I have always regarded our list of subscribers as a kind of sacred trust, and although the mere payment of a dollar per year does not nearly take care of the cost of a subscription, I have steadfastly refused to sell, rent, or loan our list to those who have sought to secure it to propagandize another cause. I would no more barter the names of our journalistic family than we would those of our natural family. . . .

"I began praying about the Father's will in the matter while in Colorado, and at 2:00 a.m., one night in Michigan, I finally reached a decision which I am here announcing subject to the divine purpose in my life. If Nell and I live and can have the health and strength to continue until that time I will deposit the mail sacks containing the final issue of the paper at the weigher's office on the dock of the main post office in Saint Louis, on December 1, 1975. Thus will end one exciting and thrill-filled era of my earthly sojourn. It is understood, of course, that the

Father may stop my pen and typewriter ahead of schedule.

"After having been a factional leader and debater for a number of years, the grace of God moved in to make my life much happier and more profitable and I began to write upon the marvelous fellowship in Christ in 1957. At the time I did not know where my prayer and study would take me. I only knew that I wanted to go where he led and follow his precious way. And if we survive to continue through the final year, the theme of my writing, and the title of my last bound copy will be simply 'Fellowship.'" —W. Carl Ketcherside, "Facing the Future," *Mission Messenger* **(December 1972): 186–187.**

118. Told to me by Garrett in conversation.

119. Ketcherside, *Pilgrimage of Joy*, **14, Loc 145.**

120. Ketcherside, *Pilgrimage of Joy*, **15, Loc 160.**

121. In a report from Cornerstone (July 1989): 3, the following statement by Ketcherside was published posthumously:

"I have been asked to announce and say a few words about my impending wedding. Most of the readers know that Fran Woodside and I plan to be married September 4th. When Nell was called up higher, I thought I could make it on my own, in spite of the fact that God said "It is not good for Man that he should be alone." The loneliness finally got to me. I asked Fran to marry. She consented. We plan to be married in a private ceremony. I do not like to make a big personal 'splash.' We will go to Hawaii for a brief honeymoon."

122. W. Carl Ketcherside, "A Letter from Texas," *Mission Messenger* **(September 1967): 130.**

123. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Facing the Issues," *Mission*

Messenger **(March 1970): 46.**

Chapter 2: The Vocabulary of the Spirit

1. "To Mr. William Jones, of London. Letter IV," Alexander Campbell, *Millennial Harbinger* **(March 1835): 111.**

The complete quotation starts in the preceding paragraph on the previous page:

"*We choose to speak of Bible things by Bible words***, because we are always suspicious that if the word is not in the Bible, the idea which it represents is not there; and always confident that the things taught by God are better taught in the words, and under the names, which the Holy Spirit has chosen and appropriated, than in the words which man's wisdom teaches.**

"There is nothing more essential to the union of the disciples of Christ than *purity* **of speech."**

2. W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Crisis of Change," *Mission Messenger* **(February 1968): 24.**

3. Ibid., 110; Here Campbell lists such phrases as:

"The Holy Trinity;" "Three persons of one substance, power, and eternity;" "Co-essential, consubstantial, co-equal;" "The Son eternally begotten of the Father;" "An eternal Son;" "humanity and divinity of Christ;" "The Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son;" "God"s eternal decrees;" "Conditional and unconditional election and reprobation;" "God out of Christ;" "Free will;" "Liberty and necessity;" "Original sin;" "Total depravity;" "Covenant of grace;" "Effectual calling;" "Free grace;" "Sovereign grace;" "General atonement;" "Particular atonement;" "Satisfy divine justice;" "Reconciled God;" "Active and passive obedience of

Christ;" "Common and special operations of the Holy Ghost;" "Imputed righteousness;" "Inherent righteousness;" "Progressive sanctification;" "Justifying and saving faith;" "Historic and temporary faith;" "The direct and reflex acts of faith;" "The faith of assurance, and the assurance of faith;" "Legal repentance;" "Evangelical repentance;" "Perseverance of the saints;" and "Falling from grace;" "Visible and invisible church;" "infant membership;" "Sacraments;" "Eucharist;" "Consubstantiation;" "Church government;" "The power of the keys," &c., &c., &c.

4. Ibid., 110–11.

5. Ibid., 111.

6. Robert Richardson, "The Nature of Christian Doctrine," *Millennial Harbinger* **(April 1856): 199–200.**

7. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Analysis of Heresy," *Mission Messenger* **(July 1961): 1–2.**

8. W. Carl Ketcherside, *The Twisted Scriptures* **(St. Louis: Standard Publishing Company, 1976), 9–10; Kindle edition (DeFuniak Spring, FL: Diversity Press, 1992), Loc 53.**

9. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Are They Apostates," *Mission Messenger* **(July 1961): 9.**

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid., 10.

12. Ibid.

13. W. Carl Ketcherside, "One Lord," *Mission Messenger* **(August 1974): 119.**

14. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "False Teachers,"** *Mission Messenger* **(August 1961): 8.**

15. **Ibid., 12.**

16. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Pattern, No. 1,"** *Ensign* **12 (April 1982): 5.**

17. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Adventures in Religion, No. 10,"** *Mission Messenger* **(December 1962): 8.**

18. **Ibid., 9.**

19. **Ibid.**

20. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Living Letters,** *Mission Messenger* **(May 1969): 77.**

21. **Ibid., 78.**

22. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Big Mistake,"** *Mission Messenger* **(October 1968): 154.**

23. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Analysis of Heresy,"** *Mission Messenger* **(July 1961): 3.**

24. **Ibid.**

25. **Ibid., 4.**

26. **Ibid., 6.**

27. **Ibid.**

28. **Ibid., 7.**

29. **Ibid.**

30. **Ibid., 8–9.**

31. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Decline of Factionalism," *Mission Messenger* (May 1962): 6.

Chapter 3: Baptism and Brothers in Prospect

1. W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Relation of Baptism to Fellowship," *Mission Messenger* (January 1964): 1.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., 4.

5. Alexander Campbell, *The Christian System* (Pittsburg: Forester & Campbell, 1839), 126–127.

6. W. Carl Ketcherside, "One Baptism," *Mission Messenger* (September 1974): 134.

7. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Discerning the Body," *Mission Messenger* (June 1975): 84.

8. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Acceptable Unto God," *Mission Messenger* (April 1959): 7.

9. Ibid., 8.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid., 9.

14. W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Relation of Baptism to Fellowship," *Mission Messenger* (January 1964): 1.

15. **Ibid., 2.**

16. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Faith and Baptism,"** *Mission Messenger* **(December 1972): 180.**

17. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Questions About Baptism,"** *Mission Messenger* **(August 1973): 116.**

18. **Ibid.**

19. **Ibid., 118.**

20. **Ibid., 120.**

21. **Ibid.**

22. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "One Baptism,"** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1974): 136.**

23. **Ibid., 138.**

24. **Ibid.**

25. **Ibid.**

26. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Sheep on the Hills,"** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1957): 2;** *italics added***.**

27. **W. Carl Ketcherside,** *The Kingdom of the Messiah* **(St. Louis: Mission Messenger, 1957), 98.**

28. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Thoughts on Fellowship, No. 3,"** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1958): 8;** *italics added***.**

29. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Making of History,"** *Mission Messenger* **(May 1963): 65.**

30. **Ibid.**

31. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Reply to Brother Lemmons,"** *Mission Messenger* **(October 1963): 145.**

32. **The nine essays are listed below with the page numbers on which they may be found in the** *Firm Foundation* **for 1963:**

"Why We Did Not Run Ketcherside's Articles." 354.
"Objections Brother Ketcherside Does Not Answer," 370.
"Further Consideration of Ketcherside's Unity Movement," 386.
"Ketcherside Again," 498.
"The Teaching of Carl Ketcherside Again," 546.
"Hidden Poison and Body of Error (1)," 562.
"Hidden Poison and Body of Error (2)," 578.
"Hidden Poison and Body of Error (3)," 594.
"Love Will Not Whitewash Error," 610.

33. **Reuel Lemmons, "Some Thoughts on Unity,"** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1963): 131.**

34. **Reuel Lemmons, "Answer to Objections,"** *Firm Foundation* **37 (September 1963): 581.**

35. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Answer to Objections (2),"** *Mission Messenger* **(November 1963): 169.**

36. **Ibid.;** *italics added*.

37. **Alexander Campbell,** *A Debate on Christian Baptism between The Rev. W. L. Maccalla and Alexander Campbell,* **(Buffaloe: Campbell & Sala, 1842), 135; (Simpkin and Marshall, 1824), 116.**

38. **Alexander Campbell,** *Christian Baptism: with its Antecedents and Consequents*, **(Bethany: Self-published, 1851), 19.**

39. **Robert Richardson, "Informal Communion,"** *Millennial Harbinger* **(March 1862): 100.**

40. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Reply to the Foregoing," *Mission Messenger* **(October 1963): 151;** *italics added***.**

In what may be a parallel reference to "Brothers in prospect" or "embryo Christians," is Tolbert Fannings reference to "Christians in confusion:"

"In most of the religious sects of the age, we see pious and God-fearing persons, whose sole desire is, to be prepared for another mode of existence. With all such, we heartily sympathise, and are willing to unite in seeking the 'straight and narrow path.' That there are Christians in confusion, we doubt not, from the declaration '*come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her plagues***.'" —Tolbert Fanning, "Our Position in Reference to the Different Religious Denominations,"** *Christian Review* **(January 1844): 2.**

In his classic, *Christian Baptism,* **Alexander Campbell wrote in a similar fashion:**

"We are, indeed, enlightened, converted; or, rather, we are enlightened, quickened, regenerated, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved by the truth believed and obeyed. Faith and obedience are in embryo, twin sisters in the heart of a convert; and are developed, manifested, and perfected by the overt acts of confession and profession, or by faith and baptism." —Alexander Campbell, *Christian Baptism***, 275.**

41. Ibid., 173; *italics added***.**

42. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Questions to the Editor," *Mission Messenger* **(December 1964): 182;** *italics added***.**

43. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Baptism and Brethren," *Mission Messenger* **(May 1973): 67;** *italics added***.**

44. W. Carl Ketcherside, "About Symphonies," *Ensign* 8 (September 1985): 148.

Chapter 4: The One-Man Pastor System

1. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Grilling the Editor," *Mission Messenger*, (February 1957): 4.

2. W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Clergy System," *Mission Messenger* (February 1974): 23.

3. For Ketcherside, the idea of "mutual ministry" included, but was not limited to "mutual exhortation," which he believed to be the practice of the early disciples. It was his sustained contention that to grow, one must exercise his gifts. If one has the gift of exhorting or encouraging his brothers, the dominance of the one-man pastor system prevents the exercise of that gift, except on the part of the pastor. A mature church, according to Ketcherside, is one in which the members are able to exhort one another, and do not need a professional exhorter.

Furthermore, the paid professional pastor controls the information to which the congregation has access. He thereby controls what is considered to be the orthodoxy of the church. Where mutual exhortation is practiced, each has opportunity to express his views of scripture for the edification of the congregation. But that, of course, assumes the freedom of the individual to interpret scripture according to conscience.

4. Alexander Campbell, "The Christian Religion: The Clergy, No. 1," *The Christian Baptist*, (October 1823): 49; Burnet edition: 18. The quotation was originally published as a single paragraph.

5. Alexander Campbell, "Address to the Public," *Christian Baptist* 2 (September 1824): 41; not included in the Burnet edition.

6. Discipulus, "Letter II. To Bishop J.," *Christian Baptist* 5 (December 1829): 114; Burnet edition: 607–608.

7. A. Straith, "To Bengelius," *Christian Baptist* 7 (February 1830): 159; Burnet edition: 623.

8. Tolbert Fanning, "Notes On A Tour, No. 4," *Christian Review* (December 1844): 266.

9. See Appendix: "The One-Man Pastor System in the *Gospel Advocate* from 1855–1909."

10. Tolbert Fanning, "The Pastorate," *Gospel Advocate* (June 1858): 161–165.

11. C. Kendrick, "Remarks," *Gospel Advocate* 18 (May 9, 1867): 360.

12. Jacob Creath, "Moses and the Cincinnati Hams," *Gospel Advocate* 31 (August 5, 1869): 731–733.

13. David Lipscomb, "Preachers or Teachers," *Gospel Advocate*, 21 (May 22, 1873): 481–485.

14. E. G. Sewell, Editorial response to "Church Suffrage," *Gospel Advocate* 43 (October 30, 1873): 1048–1049.

15. J. A. Harding, "On Hiring a Preacher to Labor with the Church," *Gospel Advocate* 51 (December 28, 1887): 828.

16. Moses E. Lard, "The Work of the Past— The Symptoms of the Future," *Lard's Quarterly*, Volume 2 (Lexington, Ky: Osborne, 1865): 258–259.

17. E. G. Sewell, "Christian Work," *Gospel Advocate* 41 (October 13, 1892): 645.

18. The date of the quote from the *Christian Standard* was found in *Bible Talk* (March 1954): 13–14. The quotation is also found in

Harding's response in the *Advocate* (May 20, 1885): 305, 308.

19. David Lipscomb, Editorial, *Gospel Advocate* (May 20, 1885): 305. Here can be seen a divergence in the strict constructionism — tending to legalism— of Lipscomb and the loose constructionism of Errett in the interpretation of the biblical text.

20. James A. Harding, "A Wonderful Concession," *Gospel Advocate* (May 20, 1885): 308.

21. Carroll Kendrick, *Live Religious Issues of the Day* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Pub. Co., 1890), 321.

22. Ibid. 408.

23. David Lipscomb, *Christian Unity: How Promoted, How Destroyed: Faith and Opinion,* (Nashville: McQuiddy Printing, 1916), 9.

24. Ibid., 14, 16, 33, 48

25. Ibid., 57. As may be clearly seen in Lipscomb's article, by the early part of the twentieth century, the concepts of faith and opinion had been assigned connotations that were unknown to the restoration fathers, but reflect the legalism set forth 30 years earlier by Daniel Sommer in his "Sand Creek Declaration."

26. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Sign Posts Along the Road," *Macedonian Call* (March 1940): 3.

"The kingdom of the clergy" was a phrase used by Alexander Campbell to refer repeatedly to the Protestant clergy system to which he was opposed.

27. Daniel Sommer, "A Forgotten Scripture, or, A 'Kingdom of the Clergy' in 'Churches of Christ.'" *Macedonian Call* (May

1940): 1.

28. [signed by elders and leaders], "Our Position," *Macedonian Call* **(May 1940): 6–7;** *italics added***.**

29. W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Preaching Question," *Macedonian Call* **(October 1941): 1.**

30. Ibid., 3.

31. Ibid.

32. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Statement of Conviction," *Missouri Mission Messenger* **(July 1945): 2–3**

33. W. Carl Ketcherside, "More Mere Monthly Ministry," *Missouri Mission Messenger* **(August 1945): 7**

34. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Mutual Ministry," *Mission Messenger* **(February 1949): 7.**

35. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Sectarian One-Man Ministry, *Mission Messenger* **(April 1949): 1.**

36. Ibid., 2.

37. W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Clerical Spirit," *Mission Messenger* **(July 1949): 8.**

38. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Straws in the Wind," *Mission Messenger* **(January 1950): 11.**

39. W. Carl Ketcherside, "The One-Man Pastor System," *Mission Messenger* **(September 1950): 1.**

40. W. Carl Ketcherside, "A Coming Debate," *Mission Messenger* **(September 1951): 9-11.**

41. W. Carl Ketcherside, "A Southern Invasion," *Mission*

Messenger **(September 1951): 9.**

42. As noted earlier, I have not been able to confirm that Ketcherside ever debated Bailey.

43. In one of his longer letters to Leroy Garrett, dated March 6, 1954, Ketcherside wrote:

"Before I go further let me apologize well and good for what may seem to you a reluctance to supply material for the March edition of Bible Talk. Your letter of request must have come soon after we left Saint Louis, and I had no mail forwarded so that I have just seen it. I would very gladly have documented material relative to Tant and David King had I been at home. I trust that the lack of ability to do so upon my part did not thwart any of your plans. We are awaiting the atomic bomb on the questions of such grave import and I am quite thrilled with the prospect of the forthcoming issue."

In a subsequent letter to Garrett, dated August 31, 1954, Ketcherside wrote, regarding the pastor system:

"I feel that we must keep hitting at this thing with all we have, and I am also contemplating a special issue in such a form that it may be handed about and passed out to others. I think that I may make the January issue of the paper a special on the clergy question, and if so I will make the ONE issue the size of BIBLE TALK so that it can be bound in with it by those who desire to keep the clergy question on tap and at their finger tips."

The original of these letters, together with dozens of similar ones from Ketcherside to Garrett, are on file in the archives of the library of Abilene Christian University. In addition to the hard copy originals, ACU also has copies of the same in PDF format.

44. W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Clergy and the Church," *Mission*

Messenger **(April 1957): 5;** *italics added.*

45. W. Carl Ketcherside, "That They All May Be One (7)," *Mission Messenger* **(July 1957): 9.**

Chapter 5: Gospel and Doctrine

1. The result of his research was published in 1977 under the title *The Twisted Scriptures.*

2. Thomas Campbell, [Letter to a] "Much respected Brother," *Millennial Harbinger* **(May 1845): 230.**

3. Alexander Campbell, "Church Edification," *Millennial Harbinger* **(October 1853): 541–554.**

This statement by Campbell, from 1853, was re-published by the editor of the *Gospel Advocate* **in 1897, followed by approving comments of what Campbell wrote.** *See* **[Regarding A. C. on preaching and teaching], Editor,** *Gospel Advocate* **6 (February 11, 1897): 82.**

4. Robert Richardson, "Nature of the Christian Doctrine, No. 2," *Millennial Harbinger* **(April 1856): 205–206.**

5. Alexander Campbell, "An Address Delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Christian Missionary Society, A.D. 1857," *Millennial Harbinger* **(November 1857): 606.**

6. Robert Richardson, "Faith versus Philosophy, No. IX," *Millennial Harbinger* **(December 1857): 700.**

7. Alexander Campbell, "Pre-eminence of Preaching in Public Worship," *Millennial Harbinger* **(April 1862): 154–55. Below is the entire excerpt:**

"It does not appear that either 'The Presbyter' or the 'North

American Review' has ever bestowed any special attention on the evangelical import and value of the words 'preaching' or 'public worship.' Preaching in public worship!

"There was *teaching***, there was singing, there was praying, there was** *exhortation* **in the Christian church; but** *preaching in the church***, or** *to the church, it not once named in the Christian Scriptures!*

"Paul once, in his 1st letter to the church in Corinth, said he would *declare* **to the Corinthians that** *gospel* **which he had** *preached* **to them; which also they had** *received***, and in which they** *stood***.**

"We *preach***, or report, or proclaim news. But who** *teaches* **news!! Who exhorts news!!**

"*We preach* **the gospel to unbelievers, to aliens, but never to Christians, or those who have received it. Paul** *taught* **the Christians; he admonished, exhorted, commended and reproved Christians, and on some occasions** *declared* **the glad tidings to them who had received them, but who seemed to have forgotten them, as he wrote to the Corinthians.**

"But stranger still, we read as follows from the same fountain: 'Preaching is the only part that really demands a peculiar order of officer-bearers in the church, or pre-supposes a gathering larger than a single household.' This is a climax we could not have expected from any of our educated cotemporaries. To the Evangelists only did the Apostle Paul say, '*Preach the word***.' Church officers had to teach, exhort, and preside over, or rule in the churches planted by the Apostles. There is not one exhortation in the Christian Scriptures to church officers— Bishops, Deacons or Elders— to preach the word. They were to** *teach* **and** *exhort***, and preside over the church. We appeal to the Epistles addressed to the churches by any of the Apostles. To Evangelists only, after the Apostles, was the commandment**

given, 'Preach the word.'

"Preaching was and is the special duty of Evangelists. The four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles develop and exemplify this. It is affirmed that when Jesus the Christ was crowned, and all authority in heaven and earth was vested in him, he gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying or building up of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, even to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, &c. This was not mere preaching. The commission of the Author and Founder of the Faith, given to his Apostles immediately after his triumph over all his and our enemies, is— 'Go, convert all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you: and, take notice, I shall always accompany you, to the conclusion of the world.'"

8. J. A. Harding, "Calling Preachers," *Gospel Advocate* **6 (February 8, 1883): 88;** *italics added***.**

9. Ibid.

10. J. A. Harding, "Bro. Butler's Defence Reviewed," *Gospel Advocate* **12 (March 19, 1884): 186–187;** *italics added***.**

11. Carroll Kendrick, "C. Kendrick to P. S. Fall," *Gospel Advocate* **16 (April 16, 1890): 243.**

12. J. C. McQuiddy, "Unvarnished Facts," *Gospel Advocate* **25 (June 24, 1909): 770–772.**

Jephthah Clayton McQuiddy began serving as an editor of the *Advocate* **in 1885. Later, in 1917, while still serving in that**

capacity, he was the first to notify readers of Lipscomb's passing and subsequently spoke at his funeral. —See *Gospel Advocate* **(November 11, 1917): 1101, 1108, 1170.**

Interestingly, in that same article, McQuiddy states:

"The man who would prevent a woman's teaching the word of God in a modest, womanlike way is a guilty sinner. The Holy Spirit does not forbid woman's teaching in the church, but he forbids her doing it in an unwoman-like manner." —Ibid., 771.

13. David Lipscomb, [Response to "Order of Worship" by W. J. Rice], *Gospel Advocate* **45 (November 8, 1900): 712–713.**

14. David Lipscomb, *Queries and Answers* **(Nashville: McQuiddy Printing, 1910), 157–158.**

15. David Lipscomb, "Query Department," *Gospel Advocate* **27 (July 3, 1913): 680;** *italics added***.**

16. In 1946, D. A. Sommer published a booklet titled *The Greatest Questions in Christendom,* **in which he included an article by W. G. Malcomson, "Mutual Ministry in the Worship of the Church of Christ." Regarding the article, Ketcherside wrote: "If you really want something worthwhile on 'Mutual Ministry' write to Bro. D. A. Sommer for a copy of 'The Greatest Questions In Christendom.' It's the finest we have ever read. . . ." —W. Carl Ketcherside, "This and That from Here and There,"** *Missouri Mission Messenger* **(October 1946): 4.**

Below is an excerpt from the Malcomson article in which he makes the case for mutual ministry:

"In this connection [items to be observed in the public assembly for the building up of the body of Christ], we refer to the words of Paul written to his brethren at Rome, Rom. 12:4-8: (4) 'For

even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office, so we who are many are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another.' (Commenting on verse 5, Macknight says: 'The meaning of the figure is that Christians depend on one another for their mutual edification and comfort, as the members of the human body depend on one another for nourishment and assistance.') (6) 'And having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of our faith; (7) or ministry, let us give ourselves to our ministry or he that teacheth to his teaching, (8) or he that exhorteth to his exhorting.'

"Further, to the same brethren Paul writes, Rom. 15:14: 'And I, myself, also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.' In Eph. 5:19, 'Speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord.'

"Paul enjoins the Thessalonian Church, I Thess. 5:11, 'Wherefore exhort one another and build each other up even as also ye do.' In Heb. 10:24-25, we read: 'And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works; (25) not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day drawing nigh.' Paul, writing to Timothy, directs him as follows: 'Till I come give attention to reading, to exhortation, to teaching' (I Tim. 5:13). Commentators, without dissent, note this passage as referring to public worship. (See Macknight, and Conybeare and Howson.)

"It is such co-operative efforts of the various members in the Church, as directed by the apostles, which "maketh the increase of the Body unto the building up of itself in love" (Eph. 4:16).

"Scripture and secular history agree that the primitive disciples

assembled statedly on the Lord's day 'to break bread.' The many quotations already submitted make plain to us that they were also enjoined to mutually attend to teaching, exhortation, the fellowship, to prayers, and the singing of psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. And, as in the Corinthian epistle, that they were reproved, cautioned, and exhorted, when their practice was out of accord with the Divine Will. I Cor. 11:22. 'What have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the Church of God and put them to shame that have not? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I praise you not.' Also Heb. 5:12, 'For when by reason of the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need again that some one teach you the rudiments of the first principles of the Oracles of God.'" —pp. 10–12.

17. W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Preaching Question," *Macedonian Call* **(October 1941): 3.**

The above is Ketcherside's first article on this topic. Below is the entire quote:

"We are opposed to hiring a man to come into a congregation which has elders, in order to do the work God has delegated the bishops. That work is to oversee and feed the flock. No one will deny that. But a lot of good people argue that it's all right to have a 'one-man preacher pastor' just so long as he does not take authority over them. The papers published by college advocates in the south all argue that the system which they uphold, of having one man hired to preach every Sunday morning and night, while the elders sit back, is scriptural because the preacher does not assume the oversight. They say that such oversight belongs to the elders, and a preacher who assumes it, would thus become like a sectarian pastor. But the same passage of God's Word which says it is the duty of the elders to "oversee" also says it is their duty 'to feed.' If taking over one of these prerogatives makes a preacher a pastor, why not the taking over of the other? If it's wrong for a preacher to

oversee the flock where there are elders, because he assumes the authority of the elders; why is it not wrong for him to do the feeding, seeing that he thereby assumes the work of the elders? What makes it right for him to assume the WORK, but wrong to assume the AUTHORITY?"

18. Ibid.

19. D. A. Sommer, "Preaching and Teaching," *Macedonian Call* **(February 1941): 4.**

20. Vernon Hurst, "Preaching and Teaching— Are They the Same?" *Missouri Mission Messenger* **(July 1948): 2.**

21. Ibid., 6.

22. W. Carl Ketcherside, "'Radiant Truth' Reviewed," *Mission Messenger* **(July 1949): 4.**

Below is an excerpt from the above under the subheading of "Teaching and Preaching."

"One gathers that this is the crux of the matter with Brother Fenton. He challenges us to place our finger on the passage which intimates that 'preaching was for the world, and teaching for the church.' He cites passages which he feels are opposed to our contention. It is therefore, upon this ground, that our future discussions must be waged, and I for one welcome the opportunity to meet the test.

"That the New Testament makes a definite distinction in the acts of preaching and teaching, every student must admit, for such passages as Matthew 4:23; 9:35; 11:1; Acts 5:42 and 28:31 are undeniable. It is the loss of this distinction which has developed the clergy pastor system our brother decries. . . . Our word 'gospel' is an abbreviation of the Anglo-Saxon term *good spell*,

and means 'good news.' . . . You can proclaim, announce, or herald good news or bad news, but you cannot admonish news, exhort news, or teach news. And you cannot, literally, preach good news to those who have already accepted it. For to them it is no longer news. It may be good, but it is no longer news! You cannot 'preach the gospel' to the church."

23. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Where Can He Find It? *Mission Messenger* **(June 1952): 12;** *italics added.*

24. *Wallace-Ketcherside Debate*, **22.**

25. Ibid., 37.

26. Ibid., 96.

Writing in late 1955, Ketcherside recalls Wallace's taunt and observes:

"It is quite apparent that some of the learned (?) products of 'our schools' were caught completely off their base in the first debate with G. K. Wallace, during which we brought out that there was a difference between 'preaching' and 'teaching.' No one can ever forget the antics of Brother Wallace who cavorted about on the platform with his hair hanging down over his face, demanding that we 'preach five minutes, then teach five minutes' and see if he could tell the difference. With all respect to this product of the Christian (?) schools it may be pointed out that the mere fact he could not distinguish a difference would not necessarily imply there was none. What gives us a 'kick' in these days is to have some student from one of the schools plaintively inquire if we have changed our minds about there being a difference. They seem to think that Leroy Garrett and I invented the distinction to employ in debate. They have never heard, so lacking and deficient are 'our schools' in real scholarship, that this has been the position of real scholars

through the ages.— W. Carl Ketcherside, "Preaching and Teaching," *Mission Messenger* **(December 1955): 12.**

In support of his contention that the distinction was made long before his time, Ketcherside then quotes from J. W. McGarvey, in his commentary on Acts 28:31:

"Preaching and teaching are here distinguished, as they are throughout the book of Acts, the former being addressed to the unbelievers, and the latter to the believers. That he did both shows that both believers and unbelievers were drawn to his lodging." —Ibid.

27. Flavel Colley and W. Carl Ketcherside, *Colley–Ketcherside Debate* **(Flavil L. Colley: Dallas, 1954), 26.**

28. Ibid., 97.

29. *Wallace-Ketcherside St. Louis Debate* **(Telegram Book Company: Longview Washington, 1954), 26;** *italics added***.**

30. Ibid.

31. In his autobiography, Ketcherside refers three times to having made the distinction between gospel and doctrine in his debates with Wallace— 197–98, Loc 3212; 205, Loc 3319; Ibid., Loc 3323. However, the phrase "gospel and doctrine" never occurs in either debate. It would appear that Ketcherside was simply articulating his recollection of past events in terms in which he had subsequently come to think.

While it would be a few years before he would explicitly contrast the content of gospel and doctrine, he was not unaware of the distinction. Rather, the focus of the debates was on the different functions of preaching and teaching and *who* **was to do** *which* **and** *where***.**

32. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Grilling the Editor," *Mission Messenger* **(February 1957): 2.**

33. W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Two Spirits," *Mission Messenger* **(March 1962): 13;** *italics added.*

34. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Adventures in Religion, No. 9," *Mission Messenger* **(April 1962): 12;** *italics added.*

The last time Ketcherside applied Paul's condemnation of those who preach "another gospel" (Galatians 1:8) to those who differed with him on doctrinal issues appears to have been in February of 1951. —W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Present Conflict," *Mission Messenger* **(February 1951): 8.**

35. W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Basis of Authority," *Mission Messenger* **(November 1962): 4.**

36. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Terms of Communion," *Mission Messenger* **(August 1963): 122–23;** *italics added.*

37. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Another Gospel," *Mission Messenger* **(January 1965): 7;** *italics added.*

38. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Gospel and Doctrine," *Mission Messenger* **(February 1965): 17.**

39. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Gospel and Doctrine," *Mission Messenger* **(February 1973): 20.**

40. C. H. Dodd, *Gospel and Law* **(New York: Columbia University, 1950), 8–10. Below is the context of the above quotation:**

"According to the evidence of the New Testament, the earliest

exponents of the Christian religion worked out a distinctive way of presenting the fundamental convictions of their faith, in a formula which they called 'the proclamation.' The Greek word here is *kerygma*. Our translators of the Bible commonly render it 'preaching;' but in its current implications at the present day the word is misleading. *Kerygma* properly means a public announcement or declaration, whether by a town crier, or by an auctioneer commending his goods to the public, or by the herald of a sovereign state dispatched on a solemn mission, to present an ultimatum, it may be, or to announce terms of peace."

"The Christian 'preacher' thought of himself as an announcer of very important news. He called it quite simply 'the good news,' or in our traditional translation, 'the gospel.' It was this 'good news' that was embedded in the 'proclamation,' the *kerygma*. It was essentially a public announcement of events of public importance.

"The form and content of the proclamation, the *kerygma* can be recovered from the New Testament with reasonable accuracy. It recounted in brief the life and work of Jesus Christ, His conflicts, sufferings, and death, and His resurrection from the dead; and it went on to declare that in these events the divinely guided history of Israel through long centuries had reached its climax. God Himself had acted decisively in this way to inaugurate His kingdom upon earth. This was the core of all early Christian preaching, however it might be elaborated, illustrated, and explained. [*See* C. H. Dodd, *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments*, London, 1936.]

"The preacher's aim was to convince his hearers that they were, indeed, confronted by the eternal God in His kingdom, power, and glory; that they, like all men, stood under His judgment upon what they had done and upon what they were, and that this judgment was now immediate and inescapable; further, that those who would put themselves under God's judgment would, through His mercy, find an opportunity open to them to enter

upon a new life; that actually, as a result of these facts which they proclaimed, a new era in the relations between God and man had begun.

"Those who responded to this appeal and placed themselves under the judgment and mercy of God as declared in Jesus Christ, became members of the community, the Church, within which the new life could be lived. These members were then instructed in the ethical principles and obligations of the Christian life. This course of instruction in morals, as distinct from the proclamation of the gospel, is covered by the term "teaching," which in Greek is *didaché*.

"This order of approach, first the proclamation, then the beginning of instruction in morals, first *kerygma*, then *didaché*, seems to have been thoroughly characteristic of the Christian mission; it is precisely this order, first *kerygma*, then *didaché*, which we have seen to be general in the New Testament writings."

41. Thomas Campbell and Stone, Barton W. and Others, in *Declaration and Address* (St. Louis: Mission Messenger, 1972, 1975), 17; Kindle edition (SCM e-Prints, 2010): Loc 717. The hard copy edition published by Mission Messenger is a reprint from the Bethany Press edition, St. Louis, 1955, 1960, 1967.

42. Ibid., 112.

43. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Gospel and Doctrine," *Mission Messenger* (February 1965): 17.

44. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Hail and Farewell," *Mission Messenger* (December 1975): 181.

45. Ibid.

Chapter 6: Covenants of Law and Grace

1. **W. Carl Ketcherside,** *Pilgrimage of Joy* **(Joplin, MO: College Press, 1991), 219–220;** *Pilgrimage of Joy* **(Stone-Campbell e-Prints, 2010), Loc 3569, Kindle.**

2. **Campbell,** *Declaration and Address***, 44–48, Loc 684.**

For ease of comprehension, I have summarized below the 13 propositions contained in Campbell's *Address***.**

In his *first* **proposition, Campbell affirms the** *indivisible nature of the spiritual body of Christ***— "That the Church of Christ is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one— Campbell then provides a definition of who is a Christian: (1) Those whose profess faith in Christ, (2) who verify their faith by obedience to him in all things according to the Scriptures, and (3) whose obedience is evidenced by "their tempers and conduct." In other words, a Christian is anyone who professes faith in Christ and whose profession is shown to be genuine through godly conduct, as depicted in scripture.**

In his *second* **proposition, Campbell proceeds to define the** *criteria for Christian fellowship***— upon what grounds one is to be recognized as a Christian and accepted into the company of the local community of faith. Those criteria are summarized conclusively by the direct command of Paul to the Roman believers: "Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God" (15:7). Here Campbell found a scriptural mandate and rationale for an end to a divided Christendom. It not only defined the terms upon which Christians are to receive one another into their association, it provided the criteria for continuing in that association— the terms of union and communion— unity and fellowship.**

In propositions *three* **through** *five***, Campbell** *recognizes scripture alone***, specifically, the New Testament,** *as a perfect rule of Christian duty***— for worship, discipline, government. "Nothing ought to be received into the faith or worship of the church; or**

be made a term of communion among Christians, that is not as old as the New Testament."

It is in propositions *six* and *seven*, that Campbell strikes a blow to the historical root of all Christian division: *deductions or inferential truths from scripture*— that is, Christian doctrine or interpretation of scripture— *cannot be made terms of communion*. In spite of the fact that such deductions may be *true* and truly called "the doctrine of God's holy word," they cannot be imposed upon those who fail to see that they conform to the teaching of scripture. Otherwise, Campbell points out, we must take the position "that none have a right to the communion of the church, but such as possess a very clear and decisive judgment; or are come to a very high degree of doctrinal information." To this Campbell adds: "whereas the church from the beginning did, and ever will, consist of little children and young men, as well as fathers." Consequently, it is illogical to expect them to all agree upon the same things at the same time.

Propositions *eight* through *thirteen* may be summarized as follows: (8) that a place in the church be given only to those who recognize Jesus as the way of salvation and who commit to be obedient to him; (9) that children of God recognize the other members of the same family and love them; (10) that division is anti-Christian, anti-scriptural, and anti-natural; (11) that division has always come from the neglect of what is expressly enjoined in scripture or from the imposition of doctrinal deductions as terms of communion; (12) that members of the body conduct themselves in a manner consistent with their profession of faith and that all ordinances revealed in scripture be observed; and (13) that human expedients required for the observance of divine ordinances be recognized as of human origin, not divine.

3. At the time the *Declaration and Address* was written, both Campbells regarded sprinkling as baptism.

4. Thomas Campbell, *Declaration and Address*, **44, Loc 679;** *italics added*. **This statement appears immediately before Proposition 1 of 13.**

5. Some 30 years later, Alexander Campbell wrote regarding Andrew Broaddus and his Baptist brethren:

"It would do them no harm to move forward a few paces towards the primitive simplicity of the gospel, and to the practice of the ancient institutions of Christ. *They would not have to give up any truth in admitting all that we contend for*, **as many of them now concede." —Alexander Campbell, "Incidents on a Tour to the South, No. 1,"** *Millennial Harbinger* **(January 1839): 11;** *italics added*.

6. In Thomas Campbell's "Prospectus of a Religious Reformation, the object of which is The Restoration of Primitive Apostolic Christianity in Letter and Spirit, in Principle and Practice," under the heading, "Analysis of the Great Salvation," he wrote:

"THIRD. Of the present and proper Effects of this Salvation.— These are justification, adoption, sanctification, assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Spirit, increase of grace, and *perseverance in it to the end of our race*." **— Alexander Campbell,** *Memoirs of Elder Thomas Campbell* **(Cincinnati: H. S. Bosworth, 1861), 261;** *italics added*.

There can be little doubt that this is a quote from both *The Baptist Catechism, commonly known as Kreach's Catechism,* **(Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1851), "adopted by the Philadelphia Baptist Association, September 22, 1742," and** *The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America* **(Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work, 1788), 387:**

"Q. 39. What are the benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, from adoption, and sanctification?

"A. The benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification, are, assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Spirit, increase of Grace, and *perseverance therein to the end***" (italics added).**

7. Thomas Campbell, *Declaration and Address***, 46, Loc 712;** *italics added.*

8. Ibid., 46; *italics added.*

9. Robert Richardson, "Reformation, No. 6," *Millennial Harbinger* **(February 1848): 75. The quotation appears as a single paragraph in the original**

10. Robert Richardson, "Reply to T. M. Henley," *Millennial Harbinger***" (July 1836): 335.**

11. Robert Richardson, "The Nature of Christian Doctrine, No. 1," *Millennial Harbinger* **(April 1856): 198.**

Richardson goes on to elaborate:

"Now, it is very far from our present purpose to controvert any supposed religious truth, or to question the soundness of any "doctrine" based upon it. Neither would we be understood as doubting the propriety of holding 'religious views,' or of having these clearly defined and stated. Unquestionably, the propositions contained in what are termed the 'evangelical doctrines,' acknowledged by most of the Protestant denominations, however sometimes awkwardly expressed, and confused in scholastic jargon or sectarian cant, are, nevertheless, fairly deducible, as to their substantial import, from Scripture

premises, and some of them might be expressed in the very terms of Scripture. Our inquiry is not, whether, in the general or the particular, 'religious doctrine' be true, but whether such doctrines or 'tenets' do really constitute what may scripturally, and hence properly, be considered *the Christian doctrine.* **That they do not form the object of the Christian faith, we have already shown, and we will now endeavor to prove that they are just as far from constituting THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.**

". . . So thoroughly has the Protestant mind been imbued with the notion that the saving efficacy of religion depends upon the accuracy of our views of it, and so completely is it preoccupied with doctrinal questions and controversies, that it seems almost incapable of entertaining simple views of Christianity, or of contemplating, with just perception, the character of this institution, as it was originally presented to the world by the ministry of the apostles. —Ibid., 198–199.

"In the Scriptures, however, in striking contrast with modern usage, the word doctrine, in the singular, though of frequent occurrence, is never, in one single instance, applied to a particular tenet or dogma; and, what is worthy of special notice, whenever it is used in the plural, when of course it does embrace particular opinions or usages, it is always employed in a bad sense. Hence we have before us, in the outset, the remarkable fact that, in Scripture, while no 'doctrine,' in the special modern sense of the word, is ever taught or recommended, all 'doctrines,' in the plural, are condemned, and Christians are warned against them. . . . —Ibid., 200.

". . . Such a thing as 'doctrine,' in the modern and theological sense of the word, seems never to have entered into the conception of the writers of the New Testament. Upon their use of the word doctrine, we would now make two remarks. The first is, that with them the word is commonly used in its general sense of teaching or instructing. The second is, that when applied to the things taught, its relation is to rules of conduct or the

principles and duties of practical life, and never to tenets to be believed." —Ibid., 201.

12. Below are two quotes from Richardson in support of this view:

"In morals he has only the liberty to choose his law— the rule to which he will conform. If he will be 'free from righteousness,' he is not then, absolutely free, but becomes at once 'the slave of sin.' If he will be free from 'the law of sin,' he then becomes at once 'the slave of righteousness.' Hence it is said that 'he that is free is the Lord's slave;' and that 'he whom the Son makes free, shall be free indeed,' and that the unerring standard that rules his life is, indeed, 'THE LAW OF LIBERTY.' —Robert Richardson, "Christian Freedom," *Millennial Harbinger* (April 1859): 203.

"Liberty can find no resting place upon a shoreless ocean, but must return, like Noah's dove, to the hand that sent it forth, until it shall be able to discover the *Terra Firma* of truth. Settled and fixed principles are the true home of Freedom. It is License alone that spurns the just restraints of law, and becomes a criminal, and a vagabond in the earth. —Robert Richardson, "Reformation, No. 6," *Millennial Harbinger* (February 1848): 75.

13. "Hence it is, that, under the law of Love, devoted service is perfect freedom; and that, in the belief and voluntary obedience of the gospel alone, man can receive that emancipation of soul; that enlargement of thought, that make him free indeed." —Ibid.

14. Alexander Campbell, "Review of the History of Churches, No. 2," *Christian Baptist* (June 1828): 264; Burnet edition: 449.

15. Ibid., 265; Burnet edition: 450. The entire quotation follows, to which italics have been added:

"But in the second place, the Jewish age was the *minority* of the religious world. During that period there was not a full grown man. The patriarchal was the infancy or *childhood*; the Jewish, the youth; and the Christian age, the *manhood* of the religious world. Let none think that this is an arbitrary distribution of the ages or epochs in the religious world. . . . We have the authority of the Holy Spirit for considering the saints, during the Jewish age, in the same predicament as minors. In this state they were kept under a ritual or prescribed form of worship. A remark or two on the 4th chapter of the Galatians may be sufficient for our present purpose. 'Now, I say,' says Paul, 'as long as the heir is a minor he differeth nothing from a bondman, although he be Lord of all. For he is under tutors and stewards until the time before appointed of his father. So also we, whilst we were minors, were in bondage under the elements of the world. But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because you are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father.'

"Here the Apostle asserts, 1st. That he and his brethren were, while under the law, in the estate of minors. 2d. While in that state they were in the condition of bondmen; kept under tutors and stewards, at whose command they must move obsequious. That the time appointed of the Father, in his Will and Testament, when this state of things should cease, had actually arrived; and now they were raised from the rank of slaves to the standing of sons.

"So soon as a person has terminated his non-age, or minority, and becomes a full grown man, he is no longer treated as a child or servant. He is allowed to have a judgment of his own, and to exercise it. This similitude the Apostles uses to represent the difference between the people of God under the old economy,

and the people of God under the new. Under the latter they are permitted to exercise their reason, and *to act from the principles infused into their minds from the development of the divine philanthropy***. Hence the New Testament, after stating the ordinances and statutes of the kingdom of Jesus, prescribes no ritual or liturgy, but leaves the worshippers to act from that holy spirit which the gospel inspires. Being adopted into the family of God, they are to be treated as sons of God, and are to act as the children of God."**

16. Alexander Campbell, "Ancient Order of Things, No. 28," *Christian Baptist* **(December 1828): 109; Burnet edition: 500.**

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid. The quote from Campbell follows. It had been broken into smaller paragraphs for ease of comprehension:

"They greatly mistake *who expect to find a liturgy, or a code of laws in the New Institution, designed to govern Christians either in their private or public relations and character.* **This may be found in the Old Institution which the God of Abraham set up amongst the child of the flesh. The nation of the Jews affords both demonstration and proof that man cannot be governed or controlled either in piety or morality by any extrinsic law, however excellent or spiritual (***Italic added***).**

"The former institution was an institution of *law***— the new an institution of** *favor***. Christians are not now, nor were they ever, under** *law***, but under** *favor***. Hence argues the Apostle:— "Sin shall not lord it over you; for you are** *not under law* **but** *under favor***." A single monosyllable represents the active principle, or law of subordination and of practical morality which it unfolds. That monosyllable is LOVE. "***Love is the fulfilling of the whole*

law." The glad tidings of the divine philanthropy is the instrument or medium of the inspiration of this principle.

"The New Institution writes upon the *heart*, and not on *marble*, the governing principle or laws of all religious and moral action. This truth recognized and apprehended, solves the difficulty which has puzzled so many minds, and so generally distracted religious society. Many Christians have read and rummaged the apostolic writings with the spirit and expectations of a Jew in perusing the writings of Moses— Jews in heart, but Christians in profession. They have sought, but sought in vain, for an express command or precedent for matters as minute as the seams in the sacerdotal robes, or the pins and pilasters of the tabernacle.

"The remote or proximate causes of most errors in disciplinary proceedings may be traced either to the not perceiving that the distinguishing peculiarity of the New, or Christian Institution, is this— that it aims at governing human action without *letter*, and causes its votaries to 'serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter;' or, to the not observing that the congregations which Christianity forms are designed rather as schools of moral excellence, than as courts of inquiry possessed of judicial authority."

20. Alexander Campbell, "Essays on the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian Ages, No. 16," *Christian Baptist* (July 1830): 289–290; Burnet edition: 657–658; *italics added*.

21. Alexander Campbell, "Sermon on the Law," *Millennial Harbinger* (September 1846): 512–513; *italics added*.

22. A. S. Hayden, *Early History of the Disciples in the Western Reserve; Ohio* (Cincinnati: Chase and Hall, 1875), 164.

23. Alexander Campbell, "Reformers *Not* Schismatics, No. 2,"

Millennial Harbinger **(May 1837): 197–198.**

24. Hayden, 167–168.

25. Ibid., 168. Additional references to the story of Aylett Raines are found in Alexander Campbell, "Millennium, No. 2," *Millennial Harbinger* **(April 1830): 147–150; and in Francis, "Journal of a Traveler,"** *Millennial Harbinger* **(September 1830): 390**

26. Alexander Campbell, "A Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things, No. 2," *Christian Baptist* **(March 1825): 152; Burnet edition: 133.**

27. Alexander Campbell, "Imprudence of Reformers," *Millennial Harbinger* **(June 1830): 258;** *italics added***.**

28. William Banowsky, *The Mirror of a Movement* **(Stone-Campbell e-Prints, 2015), Kindle e-book: Loc 32.**

29. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Grace and Faith," *Mission Messenger* **(March 1959): 5.**

30. W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Meaning of Grace," *Mission Messenger* **(May 1967): 68.**

31. W. Carl Ketcherside, *The Death of the Custodian* **(St. Louis: Standard Publishing, 1976), 66; Kindle edition, (Stone-Campbell e-Prints, 2010), Loc 566.**

32. Ibid., 69.

33. Ibid., 67; *italics added***.**

34. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Where Would Paul Attend?" *Mission Messenger* **(May 1964): 77.**

Ketcherside wrote:

"We are not saved by works although we cannot be saved without them. We are not saved because we work, but we work because we are saved. We are not products of our own workmanship. We are not self-created. We do not enter God's family by what we do for him but by what he does for us. 'For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.' The New English Bible renders this, 'For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to devote ourselves to the good deeds for which God has designed us.'"

For a Baptist perspective on salvation by grace through faith, I highly recommend *Stop Asking Jesus Into Your Heart* **by J. D. Greear, past president of the Southern Baptist Convention. While Greear believes in the security of the believer, he defines a true believer as one who lives a life of repentance and good works. To fail to do so, from an Arminian point of view, simply means one has lost his faith. From a Baptist (Calvinist) perspective, it simply means that such faith was not a saving faith. In the end, there isn't any substantial difference in the Baptist view and that of Churches of Christ, except that the latter live their lives in fear that they have failed to perform some vital commandment or have misunderstood one or more doctrines that will place them outside of Christ. The Baptists, for the most part, joyfully perform the works of faith because (1) they are assured that they are hidden with Christ in God, and (2) that being devoted to good works, their faith will prove, in the end, to be valid— or what they prefer to call a "saving faith."**

35. Ibid., 84; *italics added*.

36. Ibid., 84–85; *italics added*.

37. Ibid., 87; *italics added*.

38. Ibid., 88–89.

39. Ibid., 147, 149–151. *italics added.*

40. "We oppose creeds of human opinions only as terms of communion, or rather as signals of disunion and proscription. It is not the *writing*, **any more than the** *speaking* **or** *preaching* **our views; but the making of them** *authoritative bonds of union and reasons of excommunication*, **which we repudiate." —Alexander Campbell, "Reformers,** *Not* **Schismatics,"** *Millennial Harbinger* **(April 1837): 198.**

41. Ketcherside, *The Twisted Scriptures*, **2, Loc 145.**

42. Ibid., 18; *italics added.*

43. Ibid., 19.

44. Thomas and Alexander Campbell, along with T. H. Henley and A. W. Campbell, are on record as having rejected the idea that Amos 3:3 implies that doctrinal uniformity is required for two to walk together:

Alexander Campbell, "Remarks on Confessions of Faith," *Christian Baptist*, **(September 1824): 44, Burnet edition: 93.**

Alexander Campbell, "The Union," *Millennial Harbinger* **(May 1832): 195.**

Thomas Campbell, "A Word to the Disciples of the Ancient Gospel, In Behalf of the Reformation, and for the consideration of Opponents," *Millennial Harbinger,* **(December 1832): 584–585.**

Thomas M. Henley, "T. M. Henley's Address," *Millennial Harbinger*, **(January 1833): 17.**

A. W. Campbell, "The United Presbyterian Church," *Millennial*

Harbinger, **(February 1848): 80.**

45. Ketcherside, *The Twisted Scriptures*, **23–24;** *italics added*.

In response to an Independent Baptist who raised the question of Campbell's "full communion" with certain Baptists, Campbell wrote:

"He would next say, Do you not contend that unity of opinion is not essential to Christian union; that the one Lord, *the one faith, the one hope, and the one baptism comprehend all that can legitimately be required*? **To this I must consistently answer** *yes*. . . .

"I am yet but entering upon the subject. I shall now give my own explanation of this offensive '*full communion***' with the Baptist society. Your full communion and my full communion are very different things. You define your full communion to be 'full union in the common worship, doctrine, and institutions of any church or denomination.'**

Again you say, 'Your profession implies, according to your own principles, a sincere conviction that the whole Baptist society (regular associated Baptists) is the church of Christ, of which Jesus is the head, and that they are conformed to the New Testament law, as respects doctrine, worship, and order, exhibiting the *model* **of Christ's house,' &c. I question very much whether you yourself have this sort of full communion with the one congregation with which you associate. But this will not excuse me. Again,**

I question very much whether Paul the Apostle could have broken bread with the congregation in Rome, in Corinth, in Thessalonica, or with the congregations in Galatia, and others, at the time he wrote his letters to them. Nay, I do not think that the Saviour himself could have instituted the supper amongst the

twelve, or that they could have had full communion on your principles in that one institution the night in which he was betrayed. For none of these congregations at the times alluded to were exhibiting the model of Christ's house, 'were conformed to the New Testament, as respects *doctrine, worship, and order***,' or had this sincere conviction that all was perfect— just up to the standard of full perfection in all these particulars.**

"In the full import of the words FULL *communion***, when carried to their utmost extent, I do not know that such a communion ever was, or ever will be exhibited upon the earth. The word** *full***, I admit, may be so explained as to confine this sort of communion to the heavenly state. But in ordinary acceptation, or in its loose acceptation, it means no more than joint participation in a certain act or acts.**

When I unite in prayer with a society of disciples, I have full communion with them in certain petitions, confessions, and thanksgiving; but requests may be presented, confessions made, and thanksgivings offered, in which I have not full communion. The same may be said of any other social act of worship. All that I intend by the phrase is, that I will unite with any Baptist society in the United States, in any act of social worship; such as prayer, praise, or breaking bread in commemoration of the Lord's death, if they confess the one Lord, the one faith, the one hope, and the one baptism: provided always, that, as far as I can judge, they piously and morally conform to their profession.

But that congregations maybe found, under the banners of this [Christian] profession, with whom I would not unite in one single act of social worship, as well as individuals, I will cheerfully declare. And with *not one* **would I unite in prayer, or praise, or breaking bread,** *if that act is to be interpreted into a full, perfect, and entire approbation of all their views, doctrine, and practice, as a society or individuals***.**

Here then is the fundamental difference between your full

communion and mine. Every act of the one, you understand, as unequivocally expressing full and entire approbation of everything among them. I consider every act as only expressing approbation of the thing represented, and of them in so far as they conform to it.

Therefore, I frankly and boldly declare to them, as Paul did to the Corinthians, the things in which I praise them, and the things in which I praise them not. And I know of no way, of no course, that any Christian can pursue consistently with the whole New Testament, consistently with his serving God and his own generation, but this one. Therefore I advocate it and practise it." —Alexander Campbell, "To An Independent Baptist," *Christian Baptist*, **(May 1826): 201–202;** *italics added*. **For ease of comprehension, I have further divided the original excerpt into smaller paragraphs (the original contains three).**

46. Ibid., 34.

47. Ibid., 35; *italics added*.

48. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Another Gospel," *Mission Messenger*, **(January 1965): 6.**

49. Ibid., 7.

50. Ibid.

51. Alexander Campbell, "Missions and Missionaries," *Millennial Harbinger* **(December 1861): 668.**

52. Ketcherside, *The Twisted Scriptures*, **86–87.**

53. Ibid., 90.

54. Ibid., 91.

55. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Causing Divisions," *Mission Messenger* **(May 1959): 11–12.**

56. Ibid. 12.

57. Ketcherside, "Withdraw Yourselves," in *The Twisted Scriptures*, **103–104.**

58. Ibid., 112.

59. Ibid., 113.

60. Ibid., 114.

61. Ibid., 120–121.

62. Ibid., 121.

63. Ibid., 123.

64. Ibid., 124–125. Because of the significance of divine love in the thinking of Carl Ketcherside, the following summary of characteristics of love and hate is here included for the interested reader:

Ketcherside points to the following *characteristics of love*:

"1. To love the brethren is to abide in the light (2:10).

"2. Love for the brethren is one of the two distinctive marks of sonship with God. 'Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God' (3:1).

"3. Love for the brethren is a waymark to identify the area into which we have come as that of life. 'We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren' (3:14).

"4. Love for the brethren is a criterion by which we can determine if we are of the truth. 'And hereby we know we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him' (3:19).

"5. Love manifested toward brethren enables God to dwell in us, that is to be in fellowship with us. 'No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another God dwells in us, and his love is perfected in us' (4:12).

"6. When we are partners in Brotherly Love, Unlimited, we are freed from all torment of fear. 'Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment. . . . There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love' (4:17, 18).

Ketcherside then lists the following *characteristics of hate***, the opposite of love:**

"1. Hatred for brethren (that is, lack of love) leaves one in darkness. Regardless of how one may assert he is in the light, if he does not love, he lies. 'He that saith he is in the light and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now' (2:9).

"2. Hatred of our brethren blinds us and makes true perception impossible. 'But he that hateth his brother is in darkness and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes' (2:11).

"3. Lack of love for the brethren is proof of the fatherhood of Satan in our lives. 'In this the children of God are manifested and the children of the devil' (3:10).

"4. Those who do not love the brethren are still in the domain of death. 'We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother

abideth in death' (3:14).

"5. One who hates his brother is a murderer. 'Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him' (3:15).

"6. One who does not love does not know God. 'He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love'" (1 John 4:8). —Ibid., 125–129.

65. Ibid., 131.

66. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Thoughts on Fellowship (6)," *Mission Messenger* (June 1958): 4; *italics added.*

67. Ibid., 4–5. It is somewhat ironic that just over twenty years earlier, the *Apostolic Review* had published the "Rough Draft," which Ketcherside opposed. The *Review* took the position that 2 John 9 did not refer to every teaching of the Christian system. At that time, in opposition to the *Review*, Ketcherside wrote:

"Now it seems that the 'loose and easy' hierarchy has received some recent revelation, or has seen fit for causes best known to themselves to renounce their former position, and offer a 'new commentary' on 2 John to the brotherhood. Not long ago an Iowa elder told me that verse 10 had no application to innovators, but referred to those who did not believe that Christ had come in the flesh. Verna Morgan, head of the Morgan-Allen faction at Mattoon, said the same thing when I endeavored to show that this verse drew a line against our fellowship of 'Bible college' adherents. In the Apostolic Review, Dec. 22, 1936, W. S. Gibbons of Kirksville, Mo. says, 'The phrase, "this doctrine" in 2 John 10, has no reference whatever to any item of teaching in the Christian system. No, but only to the fundamental proposition of this system; and here it is, namely, "that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh,"' In the same journal for January

19, 1937, the editor, C. W. Sommer says in his office notes, 'But I sometimes wonder if some of the old, experienced disciples really know what "rightly dividing the Truth" means. Especially do I wonder when I hear of Bible teachers explaining that 2 John 10, 11 has reference to baptized believers who worship according to the New Testament example, and live above reproach. A careful dividing here shows that John had in mind certain ones who denied that Christ had come in the flesh . . . As to any other difference: it would have to be a matter that would condemn to everlasting hell in order to be classed with such a doctrine as John had in mind— denying that Christ had come in the flesh.'" —W. Carl Ketcherside, "A Merry Mixup," *Macedonian Call*, **(June 1937): 2.**

In his reporting of this change in the position of the *Apostolic Review*, **Ketcherside concluded:**

"In order to escape the sting of God's rebuke, and to ease a troubled conscience, they have set aside their former position, have repudiated the logic which they once proposed, and have accused old disciples of handling the word of God wrongfully." —Ibid., 3.

68. Such an application would, of course, have required not only that Aylett Raines be rejected by the Mahoning Association (*see* **above), but that Thomas Campbell himself be rejected as a non-Christian for suggesting that Raines' universalist views should be tolerated, in light of Matthew 25:46.**

69. Ketcherside, *The Twisted Scriptures*, **184.**

70. Ibid., 186.

71. Ibid., 194.

72. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Terms of Communion,"** *Mission Messenger* **(August 1963): 120–24;** *italics added*.

Sources for quotations from Campbell and Lipscomb are cited below.

Thomas Campbell, *Declaration and Address,* **46, Loc 712;**

David Lipscomb, *Gospel Advocate* **17 (April 22, 1875): 399–400.**

Chapter 7: Principles of Restoration

1. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "According to the Pattern,"** *Mission Messenger* **(February 1970): 26.**

2. **Branches of Presbyterians, called Burghers and Antiburghers, were known in the United States as "Unionists" and "Seceders," respectively.**

Thomas Campbell was an Old Light Anti-burgher Seceder Presbyterian. For a description of these designations, see:

William Herbert Hanna, *Thomas Campbell, Seceder and Christian Union Advocate* **(Cincinnati: Standard Publishing, 1935), 124–127.**

Robert Richardson, *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell***, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott &c. Co., 1868), 53. This title is included in the Kindle e-book edition which contains both volumes of Richardson's work (Stone-Campbell e-Prints, 2024), Loc 928.**

James Rankin, *A Handbook of the Church of Scotland* **(Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1879), 55–58; 152ff.**

David M. Forrester, *Adam Gib, the Anti-Burgher* **(Reprinted from**

"The records of the Scottish Church History Society," n.p, 1940), 152.

John M'Kerrow, *History of the Secession Church***, Vol. 1 (Edinburgh: Wm. Oliphant and Son, 1839), 270ff.**

Nicholas T. Batzig, "An All-American Burgher?" (*Feeding on Christ***, https://feedingonchrist.org/5698-2/, consulted on 11/17/2023).**

Seceder Presbyterians **were those who had formally seceded from the Presbyterian Church of Scotland in the year 1733, over the right to choose local pastors rather than have them appointed by the state church. They formed themselves into a Presbytery designated the "Associate Presbytery," and subsequently into an Associate Synod over multiple presbyteries. In less than fifteen years, however, the** *Seceders* **divided into two schisms— Burghers and Anti-Burghers.**

Burghers **and** *Anti-Burghers* **were** *Seceders* **who divided over the "Burgher Oath" (also referred to as the "Burgess Oath"). In 1847, the Seceder or Secession Church divided over whether its ministers should support the oath required of Burghers or Burgesses (civil authorities in a burgh) upon their election. The oath included a pledge to support and defend "the true religion presently professed within this realm and authorized by the laws thereof."**

The controversy centered around the implied identity of "the true religion." Those who opposed the taking of the burgess oath — designated Anti-Burghers— declared non-fellowship with those who supported it. (While all Seceders initially opposed the oath, not all considered the matter to be a condition for fellowship.)
Irrespective of the fact that the matter of the oath had no application outside of Scotland, this division was carried into Ireland, where Thomas Campbell initiated an effort to resolve it.

It was subsequently exported to America.

Old Light **vs** *New Light* **Presbyterians were** *Seceders* **who divided over the "voluntary principle" (complete separation of church and state). Those who introduced it were called "New Lights." The "Old Lights" were those who held to the original "establishment principle" (state support of the church), although they (being Seceders) remained aloof from the Church of Scotland because of alleged corruptions. The Burghers and Anti-Burghers also divided into "New Lights" and "Old Lights," resulting in four schisms within the Seceder Presbyterian Church— each claiming to be the true church of Christ.**

3. **The primary source for dating the events relative to Campbell and the Presbyterian courts is William Herbert Hanna's 1935 biography of Campbell: Campbell,** *Seceder and Christian Union Advocate***, 18, 31, 33–34, 36, 68, 83, 97, 106, 114.**

According to Garrison and DeGroot, it was Hanna who discovered, the minutes of the Chartiers Presbytery and those of the Associate Synod, from which he quoted extensively.— Winfred Ernest Garrison and Alfred T. DeGroot, *Disciples of Christ: A History* **(St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1948, revised 1958, by Christian Board of Publication), 159.**

Regarding the minutes of the Synod and Presbytery, Hanna states: "These books, in the original handwriting of the secretaries of the respective bodies are now in the archives of the Library of the Pittsburgh-Xenia Theological Seminary, located at Pittsburgh. Pa." —Hanna, *Thomas Campbell: Seceder and Christian Union Advocate,* **18.**

4. **Richardson,** *Memoirs***, 231; Kindle edition (2024): Loc 3160.**

It was later, on August 17, 1809, that Campbell and his followers

formed the Christian Association of Washington (Pennsylvania). It was not to be a church, "but an agency for helping to propagate the ideas of Christian union." —Hanna, *Thomas Campbell: Seceder and Christian Union Advocate***, 98.**

5. Richardson, *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell***, 236; Kindle edition (2024): Loc 3227;** *italics added***.**

Garrison and DeGroot state that this motto, "was suggested for the Christian Association when it was being organized in the summer of 1809." —*Disciples of Christ: A History***, 159.**

According to Hanna, at the initial meeting of the Christian Association, a committee was appointed "to determine upon the proper means to carry into effect the important ends of their Association." The *Declaration and Address***, ordered to be published on September 7, 1809, came as a result of that conference.** *Thomas Campbell: Seceder and Christian Union Advocate***, 118.**

6. Richardson, *Memoirs***, 236; Kindle edition (2024): Loc 3229;** *italics added***.**

7. Richardson writes:

"And as he [Campbell] was well aware that it was already conceded, in the Protestant formularies, that the Bible was the only rule of faith and practice, he felt that he had a right to urge upon all parties the practical adoption of this concession, and the pressing need there was that it should be at once cordially accepted, as the only true basis of Christian union." —Ibid., 232; Kindle edition (2024): Loc 3178.

8. Ibid., 237, Loc 3095.

9. Richardson wrote:

"Neither Thomas Campbell himself, however, nor those associated with him, had a full conception of all that was involved in these principles." —Ibid., 245; Kindle edition (2024): Loc 3349.

At the time he published the *Declaration and Address,* **Campbell considered himself to be a baptized believer, and in fellowship with those of evangelical faith. However, he was soon to discover that to speak of infant baptism was neither to speak where the Bible speaks nor to remain silent where it is silent.**

10. Alexander Campbell, *The Christian System* **(Pittsburg: Forrester &c. Campbell, 1839), 9. By "our opinions," Campbell has reference to their "interpretations of scripture" or "doctrinal views." The word "bottom" is used in its archaic sense of a "ship."**

11. Thomas Campbell, *Declaration and Address***, 10, Loc 529.**

This is the first of two occurrences of the word "model" in the *Declaration and Address* **with reference to the pattern of church worship, discipline, and government. Here are the quotations in context:**

"Dearly beloved brethren, why should *we* **deem it a thing incredible that the Church of Christ, in this highly favored country, should resume that original unity, peace, and purity which belong to its constitution, and constitute its glory? Or, is there anything that can be justly deemed necessary for this desirable purpose, both to conform to the model and adopt the practice of the primitive Church, expressly exhibited in the New Testament?" —Thomas Campbell,** *Declaration and Address***, 10,**

Loc 529.

"And we humbly think that a uniform agreement in *that* for the preservation of charity would be infinitely preferable to our contentions and divisions; nay, that such a uniformity is the very thing that the Lord requires if the New Testament be a perfect model, a sufficient formula for the worship, discipline, and government of the Christian Church. Let *us* do as we are there expressly told *they* did, say as *they* said; that is, profess and practice as therein expressly enjoined by precept and precedent, in every possible instance, after *their* approved example; and in so doing we shall realize and exhibit all that unity and uniformity that the primitive Church possessed, or that the law of Christ requires. But if, after all, our brethren can point out a better way to regain and preserve that Christian unity and charity expressly enjoined upon the Church of God, we shall thank them for the discovery, and cheerfully embrace it." — Ibid., 35, Loc 1170.

12. Ibid., 35, Loc 544; *italics added.*

13. Ibid., 38, Loc 587.

With reference to existing Protestant churches, he insisted that they "are not only agreed in the great doctrines of faith and holiness, but are also materially agreed as to the positive ordinances of the Gospel institution." —Ibid., 10, Loc 540.

In the Appendix to the *Declaration and Address*, **Campbell makes clear:**

[We] have overtured to our brethren what appears to us undeniably just and Scripturally evident, and which, we humbly think, if adopted and acted upon, would have the desired effect; adopted and acted upon, not indeed as a standard for the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the Church, *for*

it pretends not to determine these matters, **but rather supposes the existence of a fixed and certain standard of Divine original, in which everything that the wisdom of God saw meet to reveal and determine, for** *these* **and all other purposes, is expressly defined and determined; between the Christian and which, no medium of human determination ought to be interposed. —Ibid., 95, Loc 1434;** *italics added.*

14. Ibid., 10, Loc 521.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid., 9, Loc 516.

17. Ibid., 8, Loc 485.

18. Ibid., 16, Loc 682.

19. Ibid., 6, Loc 427.

20. Ibid., 15–16, Loc 679; *italics added***.**

21. Ibid., 24, Loc 876; *Italics added***.**

By the statement "We have nothing new" it seems clear that we are to understand him to mean that he had no interpretation of scripture to offer, since each could, and should, read it for himself and form his own opinion as to what it means.

Thirty-four years later, Alexander Campbell observed:

"Indeed, there is nothing strictly sectarian in our views. There is no opinionism in our system of operations. The facts we believe are admitted; the ordinances we practice are admitted; the piety and the morality we inculcate, are admitted— universally admitted, by all Christendom." —*A Debate between Rev. A. Campbell and Rev. N. L. Rice, on the Action, Subject, Design and*

Administrator of Christian Baptism; also, on the Character of Spiritual Influence in Conversion and Sanctification, and on the Expediency and Tendency of Ecclesiastic Creeds, as terms of Union and Communion. **(Lexington: A. T. Skillman & Son, 1844), 798.**

22. In the first proposition of his *Declaration and Address*, Campbell insists that there should be no schism or division within the Church of Christ. That thought is elaborated in the proposition that follows:

"3. That in order to do this, nothing ought to be inculcated upon Christians as articles of faith; nor required of them as terms of communion, but what is *expressly taught* and enjoined upon them in the word of God. Nor ought anything to be admitted, as of Divine obligation, in their Church constitution and managements, but what is *expressly enjoined* by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles upon the New Testament Church; either in *express terms* or by approved precedent." — Thomas Campbell, *Declaration and Address*, 16, Loc 694; *Italics added*.

Earlier in the document, Campbell makes clear that, while one may judge a brother who manifestly violates the *express letter* of the law, to judge him on the basis of the content of his doctrinal deductions is not only a violation of his rights and liberties, it is an *express violation of the law of Christ*:

"We are also of opinion that as the Divine word is equally binding upon all, so all lie under an equal obligation to be bound by it, and it alone; and not by any human interpretation of it; and that, therefore, no man has a right to judge his brother, except in so far as he manifestly violates the express letter of the law. That every such judgment is an express violation of the law of Christ, a daring usurpation of his throne, and a gross intrusion upon the rights and liberties of his subjects." — Thomas Campbell, *Declaration and Address*, 3, Loc 365; *Italics*

added.

23. "The reformation for which we plead, is the exhibition of the ancient gospel and law of Christ, as preached and inculcated by the Apostles, and expressly recorded in the New Testament.

"Objection. **All Professions say so.**

"Answer. **Do they do so? If, they do, we are all agreed; but if not, that is no reason why** *we* **should not do so. And if all do what we propose and urge, whence come our divisions. If all that preach and teach spoke the same things, would not our divisions speedily terminate? And can this ever take place and be maintained till all obey the apostolic injunction, 'Preach the word,'— and,— 'If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God speak?' Pray how can we do this, but by exhibiting the recorded word as delivered by the Apostles? Have we any authority to preach any thing else? Have we any authority to explain the gospel or law of Christ; much less to add to the propositions either of the law or the gospel, by inculcating any thing as matter of faith or obedience, that is not expressly inculcated as such in the New Testament.**

We do not, however, question the authority of translating, or the grammatical exposition of words and phrases,— but, merely, of theological explanation, for the purpose of making these expositions, inferences, and opinions, articles of faith, and terms of communion, thus new-modelling the christian religion by those additions and alterations, which now distinguish one sect from another.

"*Objection***. But may not inferences and opinions, formed by just reasoning, be as true as the text? and, if so, ought they not to be received as of equal authority?**

"To the latter, we answer, No; and that for the following

reasons:— First, because it was the will of Christ to make the knowledge and belief of these propositions a part of his religion; but upon the belief and obedience of what is expressly recorded as such, did confer upon the believing and obedient all the blessings of his kingdom,— viz. righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Second, because it is not the will of Christ to make all moral and religious truth, or every thing that might be fairly deduced from scripture promises, a part of his religion; for were this the case "the world itself could not contain the books that should be written;" as John says of the many other things which Jesus did, which are not written— not recorded. Third,

"To the latter, we answer, No; and that for the following reasons:— First because it was not the will of Christ to make the knowledge and belief of these propositions a part of his religion; but upon the belief and obedience *of what is expressly recorded as such***, did confer upon the believing and obedient all the blessings of his kingdom,— viz. righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.**

"Second, because it is not the will of Christ to make all moral and religious truth, or every thing that might be fairly deduced from scripture promises, a part of his religion; . . .

"Third, because inferences and opinions are the proper and immediate effects of human reasoning and judgment; and are, therefore, but of *human* **authority; whereas divine testimony and law are the proper and immediate effects of a** *divine* **authority. Wherefore, in the belief and obedience of the former, we obey man; but in the belief and obedience of the latter, we obey God, having an immediate respect to his** *express* **authority,** *and that alone.*

"Fourth, because were all deducible inferences from the holy scriptures, or even a distinct apprehension of every thing expressly contained in them, made a part of the Christian

religion, where is the man that could be justly entitled to the name of Christian, and where should we find a society of such?

"But then, 'How can two walk together except they be agreed?' True, unless they be agreed to walk together. But can no two agree to walk together in religious fellowship, unless they think alike in all religious matters? And, if not, where shall we find the two that can walk together?

"But, perhaps, it will be said, the necessary agreement is only to be understood of things of an essential character. Well, be it so; but by what rule is this to be determined? The difficulty of agreement here, appears to be as insuperable as in the former case. Does not every sect think the things that they have agreed upon, for that purpose, to be quite essential; yet no two sects agree on what these ought to be. —T. W. [Thomas Campbell], "A Word to the Disciples of the Ancient Gospel, In behalf of the Reformation, and for the consideration of Opponents," *Millennial Harbinger* **(December 1832): 584–85;** *italics added.*

24. "For it is undeniable, that there is an almost universal agreement amongst the various evangelical denominations, in regard to the great revealed truths of Christianity; and that they are separated, alienated and belligerent, for the sake of certain favorite opinions, which have been promulged by their founders. Each one admits that there exists this common Christianity, apart from denominational peculiarities, and that salvation is possible in any of these parties, yet each continues to urge its distinctive tenets, and maintain its peculiar opinions, as though the salvation of the world depended upon these alone." —"Principles and Purposes of the Reformation, No. 1," *Millennial Harbinger* **(October 1852): 580.**

25. Alexander Campbell, "Confessions of Faith—Confessions of Opinion," *Christian Baptist* **7 (February 1826): 141; Burnet**

edition: 216.

26. A close examination of the *Declaration and Address* **will show that the phrase "inferences and deductions from Scripture," for Thomas Campbell, meant "doctrine."**

"That although *inferences* **and** *deductions* **from scripture premises, when fairly inferred, may be truly called the** *doctrine of God's holy word***: yet are they not formally binding upon the consciences of christians farther than they perceive the connection, and evidently see that they are so." —***Declaration and Address***, 17, Loc 712;** *italics added***.**

While such doctrinal exhibitions contain inferential truths, as noted above, they are *not* **to be made terms of communion. He then adds:**

"That although *doctrinal exhibitions* **of the great system of Divine truths, and defensive testimonies in opposition to prevailing errors,** *be highly expedient***, . . . these must be in a great measure the effect of human reasoning, and of course must contain many inferential truths, they ought** *not to be made terms of Christian communion***." —Ibid., Loc 717;** *italics added***.**

Campbell goes on to say that the text of scripture itself ought to be our rule— not doctrinal explanations of it:

"You lovers of Jesus, and beloved of him, . . . You believe that *the word itself* **ought to be our rule, and** *not any human explication of it***; so do we." —Ibid., 21, Loc 808;** *italics added.*

He further explains:

"There is a manifest distinction between an *express Scripture declaration***, and the conclusion or inference which may be deduced from it." —Ibid., 25, Loc 920;** *italics added***.**

With regard to human standards, Campbell writes:

"We fairly understand and consider them as human expedients, or as certain *doctrinal declarations* **of the sense** *in which the compilers understood the Scriptures***." —Ibid., 39, Loc 1266.** *italics added***.**

With regard to how such doctrinal declarations are to be regarded, he insists:

"We would then no longer exalt our own opinions and inferences to an equality with *express* **revelation." —Ibid., 38, Loc 1245;** *italics added***.**

Finally, in evidence of the fact that to "speak where the scriptures speak" was, in the mind of Campbell, to speak the very words of scripture— as opposed to a human explanations of what the text means— he states:

"And may we not with equal consistency hold fast *the expressly revealed* **will of God***, in the very terms in which it is expressed in his holy word,* **as the** *very expression* **of our faith and** *express* **rule of our duty . . . ?" —Ibid., 44, Loc 1393;** *italics added***.**

27. In 1826, Alexander Campbell wrote:

"So long as any man, woman, or child, declares his confidence in Jesus of Nazareth as God's own Son, that he was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification; or, in other words, that Jesus is the Messiah, the Saviour of men; and so long as he exhibits a willingness to obey him in all things according to his knowledge, so long will I receive him as a Christian brother and treat him as such." —"Reply" (to R. B. S. re forbearance), *Christian Baptist* **9 (April 1826): 183; Burnet edition: 230.**

Four years later, he echoed the same sentiment:

"No man can, with either reason or fact on his side, accuse me of making divisions among christians. I declare non-fellowship with no man who owns the Lord in word and deed. Such is a christian. He that denies the Lord in word or deed is not a christian. A Jew or a Gentile he may be, a Pharisee or a Sadducee he may be, but a *Christian* he cannot be!

"If a man confess the Lord Jesus, or acknowledge him as the only Saviour sent of God; if he vow allegiance to him, and submit to his government, I will recognize him as a christian and treat him as such. If a man cause divisions and offences by setting up his own decisions, his private judgment, we must consider him as a *factionist*, and as such he must be excluded— not for his difference in opinions, but because he makes his opinion an idol, and demands homage to it." —Alexander Campbell, "Remarks on the Above" (letter from R. T. Brown), *Christian Baptist* 11 (June 1830): 263; Burnet edition: 651. The above appears as a single paragraph in the original.

Some twenty years later, Campbell provided a practical example of this outlook when he wrote concerning destructionism* and those who espoused the view:

"I therefore, in my best views of it, regard it as a false refuge— a soul-withering delusion. It is, with me, truly a snare of the devil, and once deluded by it, few are ever rescued from its entanglements. I never fellowshipped [*shared*] it; and while the theory was working and fermenting in some minds, and we had not personally tested its fruits and tendencies, I did not non-fellowship any one merely because he might be, theoretically, vacillating in that direction. But still more influential [*in not declaring non-fellowship with them*] was the declaration of those unfortunates during the first stages of the malady— that they did not discard future punishments.

"So long, then, as they admitted the future punishment of the

wicked, and that it would not be with the wicked forever as with the righteous, I did not feel myself authorized to say, with some of my brethren, that they ought to be excommunicated from the Christian profession. . . . I would still bear with any one so weak in the faith as to entertain such an opinion, provided only, on his part, there was *no effort to make proselytes to it,* **or dogmatize upon it as though it were an article of belief." —Alexander Campbell, "Reply" to "Dr. Field— Destructionism,"** *Millennial Harbinger*, **(September 1850): 518–519;** *italics added*; **comments inserted in square brackets are mine. The above appears as a single paragraph in the original.**

Remarkably, Campbell never declared non-fellowship with anyone over an interpretation of scripture which he considered to be incorrect unless it contradicted the verbatim text of scripture.

Below is the output from the artificial intelligence app, ChatGPT, when asked to "explain" Campbell's statements quoted above. While the output consisted of a single paragraph, I have divided it into multiple paragraphs for ease of comprehension:

"The author expresses a strong disapproval of a particular belief or theory, which he sees as a 'false refuge' and a 'soul-withering delusion.' He considers it a dangerous trap and associates it with the influence of the devil.

"The author did not actively oppose those who were still exploring this belief, as long as they acknowledged the concept of future punishment for the wicked. However, once individuals started rejecting the idea of eternal punishment for the wicked, the author felt compelled to distance himself and considered the possibility of excommunication from the Christian community for those who embraced such views.

"The author emphasizes tolerance for those with differing

opinions as long as there is no attempt to convert others or assert the belief as a fundamental tenet."

Rather than "as a fundamental tenet" I would suggest, "as a test of Christian fellowship."

Incidentally, I might add, at no other point in this work was AI consulted for any purpose. This single use of the technology was merely experimental, but decidedly helpful.

***Destructionism is the view that the "everlasting destruction" of the wicked, referred to in 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9, has reference to the absolute destruction or annihilation of body, soul, and spirit, in contrast with the notion of conscientious eternal suffering. From March 1837, through August 1839, Alexander Campbell carried on a written debate in the *Harbinger* with Dolphus Skinner of Utica, New York, on the subject of Universalism, which included the concept of Destructionism. The debate was later published by Skinner in 1840.**

More recently, Edward Fudge makes similar arguments in his book *The Fire That Consumes: A Biblical and Historical Study of the Doctrine of Final Punishment*, Third Edition, (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2011).

28. The report was filed upon Campbell's return from a three-month tour. The context of the phrase is given below:

Of whatever advantage my tour has been to others, in these respects, it has doubtless been of much to me. The kingdom and dominion of the clergy, the necessity of a *restoration* of the ancient order of things, and the proper method of accomplishing it have opened with greater clearness to my view.— Alexander Campbell, *Christian Baptist* 6 (January 1825): 124; Burnet edition: 123.

29. **The first of the series appeared in the** *Christian Baptist* **7 (February 1825): 132; Burnet edition: 126. The series of 32 installments ran through September of 1829; see** *Christian Baptist* **2 (September 7, 1829): 47; Burnet edition: 585.**

30. **Alexander Campbell, "On Experimental Religion, No. 2,"** *Christian Baptist* **11 (June 1827): 225; Burnet edition: 340.**

31. **The first essay in the series, "On the Ancient Gospel," appeared in the** *Christian Baptist* **6 (January 1828): 128; Burnet edition: 401. The last of the series appeared in** *Christian Baptist* **4 (November 1848): 97; Burnet edition: 495.**

32. **See "Table of Contents," Alexander Campbell,** *A Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things: Essays by Alexander Campbell* **(Stone-Campbell e-Prints, 2020), Loc 2.**

See also, "Table of Contents," Robert Richardson, *Principles and Objects of the Religious Reformation, Urged by A. Campbell and others, Briefly Stated and Explained,* **Third Edition, Revised and Enlarged, (Cincinnati: H. S. Bosworth, 1853), 3; Kindle edition (Stone-Campbell e-Prints, 2013), Loc 1.**

33. **"Nevertheless, after all, we certainly concur with the rest of the religious world, in making a distinction between what is properly and especially 'the faith,' or the Christian faith, and a general belief and reception of the Divine testimony, contained in the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments. But we differ from all the parties here in one important particular, to which I wish to call your special attention. It is this: that while they suppose this Christian faith to be** *doctrinal***, we regard it as** *personal***. In other words, they suppose doctrines, or religious tenets, to be the subject-matter of this faith; we, on the contrary, conceive it to terminate on a person—** *the Lord Jesus Christ himself***. While they, accordingly, require an elaborate confession from each convert— a confession mainly of a doctrinal and intellectual character, studiously elaborated into an extended**

formula— we demand only a simple *confession of Christ* **— a heartfelt acknowledgment that** *Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God.*

"The Christian faith, then, in our view, consists *not in any* **theory or** *system of doctrine*, **but in a sincere belief in the person and mission of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is** *personal* **in its subject, as well as in its object; in regard to him who believes, as well as in regard to that which is believed. It consists of simple facts, directly connected with the personal history and character of Jesus Christ as the Messiah and the promised Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. It is personal in its object, leading to personal regard and love for Christ, and a personal interest in his salvation. It consists not in definitions; neither does it embrace the litigated questions of sectarism. It contains not one, much less five cardinal points of speculative theology; nor does it inflict upon the believer, for his sins,** *forty articles save one*. **The gospel of salvation, indeed, were ill-fitted to be preached to every creature, illiterate or learned, if it consisted, as some imagine, of those ponderous bodies of divinity, and intricate systems of theology, which have oppressed the energies and entangled the movements of the Protestant world.**

"It has been, indeed, the great error of Protestants, and the great cause of all their schisms, that they have sought to supersede this direct personal reliance upon Christ, by a mere intellectual assent to a set or system of tenets. . . . Happy would it be for the world, if all could be induced to rest content with that 'common Christianity,' which it is the very object of the present Reformation to present to the religious community as the only means of securing unity and peace.*" —***Richardson,** *Principles and Objects*, **25–28, Loc 328.**

34. While often attributed to Rupertus Meldenius (1582–1651), Philip Schaff makes the following observation regarding its provenance:

"It appears for the first time in Germany, in A.D. 1627 and 1628, among peaceful divines of the Lutheran and German Reformed churches, and found a hearty welcome among moderate divines in England." —Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church***, Vol. 7, (Grand Rapids: W. M. Eerdmans, 1910), 650ff.**

He goes on to say:

"The authorship has recently been traced to Rupertus Meldenius, an otherwise unknown divine, and author of a remarkable tract in which the sentence first occurs." —Ibid.

Meldenius wrote:

"Verbo dicam: '*si nos servaremus in necessariis unitatem, in non necessariis libertatem, in utrisque caritatem, optimo certe loco essent res nostrae,***'— 'I will say in a word: if we kept unity in what is necessary, freedom in what is not necessary, and charity in both, our affairs would certainly be in the best place.'"**

This is sometimes paraphrased as "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity."

A similar maxim, was expressed by Richard Baxter (1615–1691): In necessariis unitas, in non-necessariis (or, dubiis) libertas, in utrisque (or, omnibus) caritas" (Schaff): "In fundamentals unity, in non-fundamentals (or doubtful things) liberty, in all things charity."

While the expression does not appear to be found in either Barton W. Stone's *Christian Messenger* **or Alexander Campbell's** *Christian Baptist,* **nor in the works of Robert Richardson, it does occur three times in the** *Millennial Harbinger***— once by Joseph King and twice by Charles Loos— all appearing after the death of Alexander Campbell.**

Joseph King states: "In matters of faith, unity; in opinion, liberty; in all things charity." —"A Memorial Sermon on the occasion of the Death of Alexander Campbell," *Millennial Harbinger* (May 1866): 203.

Charles L. Loos wrote: "In necessary things, unity; in doubtful things, (opinions,) liberty; in all things, charity. —"Christian Union," *Millennial Harbinger* (May 1866): 223.

Later, Loos wrote: "In necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus caritas;— In essentials unity, in doubtful things liberty, in all things charity," —"Evils of Sectarianism," *Millennial Harbinger* (February 1868): 114.

For years the *Christian-Evangelist* used a version of the slogan as part of its masthead but gave it a more specific connotation: "In faith, unity; in opinion and methods, liberty; in all things, charity."

35. The "Symposium" may be found on the following pages of the *Christian-Evangelist* for 1908: 1510, 1545, 1578, 1610, 1643.

An example of the variety of views regarding faith and opinion — some forty-two years following the death of Alexander Campbell— may be seen in the issue of the *Christian-Evangelist* for December 24, 1908. Frank E. Boren, a self-proclaimed "layman," articulates the view that the form of baptism should be regarded as a matter of opinion, and asks: "By what right do we make Mr. Campbell's opinion, or ours, a test of fellowship in our churches?" —Incidentally, this same argument was made at one time by Barton W. Stone, and discussed with Alexander Campbell, in an article titled "Opinion," *Christian Messenger* (January 1831): 19, and *Millennial Harbinger* (February 1831): 102.

Boren's contribution was followed by a response from the editor,

J. H. Garrison:

"Brethren are in danger of making the distinction between faith and opinion much more difficult than the New Testament makes it, or than our fathers made it. The New Testament does not tell us about faith in things or in doctrines, but in God and in Christ. Faith relates to a person. We do not believe in repentance or in baptism, or in prayer, but in Jesus Christ, and do those things because he taught and commanded them. A Christian is one who believes in Christ and obeys him to the best of his ability. But Christians may and do err in doctrine and practice. Reformations are efforts to return to Christ's will, and they seek to embody themselves in local churches which are supposed to be conformed to New Testament faith and practice. If the form of baptism has been changed so that it does not symbolically express the inner meaning and spiritual significance, it is not inconsistent in a reformation seeking to restore New Testament Christianity to insist on the original form, as well as on its spiritual content. This does not involve dechristianizing all who have made a mistake as to the form of baptism, but it does involve the idea that all Christians have not conformed to the New Testament pattern of church membership, which the reformation is seeking to restore and to illustrate." —*Christian-Evangelist*** **52 (December 24, 1908): 1643.**

Another contributor, E. W. McDiarmid, writes: "Faith is belief that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Opinion is all else."

36. "The distinction between faith and opinion was clearly drawn at the very commencement of the present effort at Reformation. It was evident to those with whom this movement originated, that the strifes and divisions of religious society were owing, not so much to differences in regard to the great facts and principles of Christianity, as to the theories and speculative opinions according to which men attempted to construct their

religious systems. It was hence especially insisted on, that a broad distinction should be made between the things of direct revelation, and those remote inferences, conjectures, possibilities or even probabilities which depended upon mere human reasonings. The former alone were to be received as matters of faith. The latter were to be dismissed as unworthy of entire confidence, and as constituting no just ground either of Christian fellowship, or of ecclesiastical censure." —Alexander Campbell, "Untaught Questions, No. 3," *Millennial Harbinger* **(July 1859): 374.**

Much earlier, in 1834, Campbell responded to a pseudonymous inquiry regarding the difference between faith and opinion:

"Difficulty 1st. How shall we determine what is matter of faith, and what matter of opinion?

"Solution.— Matters of faith are the facts testified in the Scriptures. God's promises, as well as his threatenings, are all facts. It is a fact that he has promised, that he has threatened, that he has uttered such things. Things done are facts. Things spoken are amongst things done. It is a fact that God created Adam— that he spoke to Adam— that he pronounced blessings upon the obedient, and curses on the disobedient, &c. The whole testimony of God is a record of sayings and doings. It contains precepts, ordinances, promises, threatenings, &c. All these are objects of faith— the promises are objects of hope— the threatenings objects of fear as well as of faith. Laws require obedience, but they are first received by faith— promises call for hope, but they are received by faith— Jesus calls for love to himself, but he is an object of faith, &c. &c. I am doubtless understood." —Alexander Campbell, "Response" [to "An Inquirer"], *Millennial Harbinger* **(December 1834): 608.**

Later, in the same essay, Campbell continues:

"Testimony is essential to faith; evidence of sense to knowledge,

in its strict and philosophic import; and speculation, inference, or conjecture, to opinion. The ideas acquired by faith are, I own, in a subordinate sense, called knowledge; because of the certainty which the mind feels in good testimony. By faith I understand or know that the worlds were framed by the word of God. It is only by faith that I understand or feel assured that the universe was created by the word of God. Thomas is said to have believed when he saw; but this imports not that faith comes by sight, but that he believed the testimony of those who saw the risen Jesus when he saw the print in his hands and feet. All exceptions and objections to this definition of faith, knowledge, and opinion, are easily disposed of; for in propriety of language and of mental philosophy, faith comes by hearing testimony— knowledge, by the exercise of our minds and senses upon the objects presented to our senses— and opinions, by our reasonings on all subjects where both testimony and experience are wanting." —Ibid., 609.

37. Alexander Campbell, "Extracts from My Sentimental Journal, No. 1," *Christian Baptist* **9 (April 1834): 173; Burnet edition: 58.**

Early in his writing career, Alexander Campbell stated what has come to be familiar to students of his writings:

"But the grandeur, sublimity, and beauty of the foundation of hope, and of ecclesiastical or social union, established by the author and founder of Christianity, consisted in this, that the belief of one fact, and that upon the best evidence in the world, is all that is requisite, as far as faith goes, to salvation. *The belief of this one fact, and submission to one institution expressive of it, is all that is required of Heaven to admission into the church***. A Christian, . . . is one that believes this one fact, and has submitted to one institution, and whose deportment accords with the morality and virtue taught by the great Prophet (***italics added***).**

". . . Every such person is a Christian in the fullest sense of the word, the moment he has believed this one fact, upon the above evidence, and has submitted to the above mentioned institution; and whether he believes the five points condemned or the five points approved by the Synod of Dort, is not so much as to be asked of him; whether he holds any of the views of the Calvinists or Armenians, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, or Quakers, is never once to be asked of such a person, in order to admission into the Christian community, called the church." —Alexander Campbell, "The Foundation of Hope and of Christian Union," *Christian Baptist* **9 (April 1824): 177; Burnet edition: 60;** *italics added***. The text above appears as a single paragraph in the original.**

This same sentiment was expressed by Campbell, in 1828, in a speech made before the Mahoning Baptist association meeting in Warren, Ohio. In that speech, Campbell dealt with matters of knowledge, things of faith, and matters of opinion, and "illustrated the manner in which these principles would solve the difficult problem of the union of Christians, and yet disturb neither the faith nor the piety of any one." Campbell's speech, along with the details of other related events, was recorded by A. S. Hayden— who attended the meeting— in his *Early History of the Disciples in the Western Reserve* **(Cincinnati: Chase & Hall, 1875), 165.**

38. "That although doctrinal exhibitions . . . ought not to be made terms of Christian communion; unless we suppose, what is contrary to fact, that none have a right to the communion of the church, but such as possess a very clear and decisive judgment, or are come to a very high degree of doctrinal information; whereas the Church from the beginning did, and ever will, consist of little children and young men, as well as fathers." — Thomas Campbell, "Proposition 7," *Declaration and Address***, 17, Loc 717.**

39. "The Christian community is composed of persons old and young, in years and inexperience; of old men, young men, and little children in Christ Jesus— a majority of whom, like the majority of a borough, a parish, a city, or a county, are not always competent judges of either law or fact. They are not, in one word, competent judges of all questions of controversy; and of course, it would be a defect in any institution to demand of all its members that which all its members seldom or ever have hitherto attained." —Alexander Campbell, "Discipline," *Millennial Harbinger* **(July 1839): 329.**

40. "But although one good argument is all-sufficient to prove any one proposition; and although, in various departments of his works and ways, the great Author of nature has used but one argument; yet, reasoning from the philosophy of the human mind, I have thought it expedient, on the present occasion, to introduce various arguments deduced from different sources and classes of evidence; rather, indeed, after all, as parts of one great argument, in support of the apostolic and divine ordinance. Not, however, I repeat, because of any supposed inadequacy in any one of them, but because we have so many ways of reasoning— so many modes of thinking; no two minds reasoning alike in all respects, no two eyes seeing alike, no two ears hearing alike, we have to approach the human understanding by various avenues, one particular argument carrying conviction to one mind, while another, and perhaps a weaker argument, carrying conviction to another mind." — *Campbell–Rice Debate*, **172.**

41. Robert Richardson, "Reformation, No. 6," *Millennial Harbinger* **(February 1848): 73.**

42."It is preposterous to expect that men will ever agree in their religious opinions" [doctrinal views]. "It is neither necessary nor desirable that they should do so. It is no where commanded in the Scriptures that men should be of one opinion. It is there

declared that there is "ONE FAITH," but it is no where said that there is one opinion. On the contrary, differences of opinion are distinctly recognised, and Christians are expressly commanded to receive one another without regard to them. Rom. xiv. i. As well might we expect to conform the features of the human face to a single standard, as to secure a perfect agreement of men's minds. Hence there can be no peace, unless there be liberty of opinion. Each individual must have a perfect right to entertain what opinions he pleases, but he must not attempt to enforce them upon others, or make them a term of communion or religious fellowship." —Robert Richardson, "Principles and Purposes of the Reformation, No. 1," *Millennial Harbinger* **(October 1852): 581.**

43. "Human creeds are composed of the inferences of the human understanding speculating upon the revelation of God. Such are all those now extant. The inferences drawn by the human understanding partake of all the defects of that understanding. Thus we often observe two men sincerely exercising their mental powers upon the same words of inspiration, drawing inferences or conclusions, not only diverse, but flatly contradictory.

"This is the result of a variety of circumstances. The prejudices of education, habits of thinking, modes of reasoning, different degrees of information, the influence of a variety of passions and interests, and, above all, the different degrees of strength of human intellect, all concur in producing this result. The persons themselves are very often unconscious of the operation of all these circumstances, and are, therefore, honestly and sincerely zealous in believing and in maintaining the truth of their respective conclusions.

"These conclusions, then, are always private property, and can never be placed upon a level with the inspired word. Subscription to them, or an acknowledgement of them, can never be rationally required as a *bond of union***. . . .**

"But as Christians have never yet all possessed the same prejudices, degrees of information, passions, interests, modes of thinking and reasoning, and the same strength of understanding, an attempt to associate them under the banners of a human creed composed of human inferences, and requiring unanimity in the adoption of it, is every way as irrational as to make a uniformity of features, of color, of height, and weight, a bond of union. A society of this kind never yet existed, and we may, I think, safely affirm, never will." —Alexander Campbell, "A Restoration of the Ancient Order of things, No. 2," *Christian Baptist* **8 (March 1825), 154–55; Burnet edition: 134. This quotation appears as a single paragraph in the original.**

44. *See* **Propositions 2 and 3 in Thomas Campbell,** *Declaration and Address***, 16, Loc 690.**

45. Thomas Campbell, "To the Editor of the Christian Baptist," *Christian Baptist* **5 (December 1829): 115ff; Burnet edition: 608ff.**

46. Ibid., 116; *Italics added***.**

47. Ibid., 123; Burnet edition: 612.

48. ". . . we have proposed, as reformers, to confine ourselves to the profession and practice of Christian faith and duty, as expressly declared in the Holy Scriptures: and this, also, in an uncontroversial manner: see the said Declaration, page 52. That thus holding forth the truth in love, as expressly revealed in the sacred volume, we might let controversy die a natural death.

"And as the faith and duty, which constitute the whole of our divine religion, consist in the belief and obedience of the gospel and *law of Christ***, Matth. xxviii. 19, 20, and not in human opinions, they can, therefore, make no part of our holy religion; consequently, we have nothing to do with them, unless they go to**

deny or corrupt it; and, if so, the best way to obviate them is fully and scripturally to teach what they oppose, without any express reference to the opinions and arguments of those opponents, unless they publicly challenge us either by word or writing: and, even if they should, we should meet them with Christian dignity, speaking the truth in love; and thus contend scripturally and "earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." And this being done, leave it so, without so much as once alluding to it in our public teaching, more than if it had never happened. . . .

"In the mean time, however, we should carefully advert to *the plain systematic distinction between preaching and teaching;* **the former being intended for the conversion of sinners; the latter for the comfort and edification of saints, as above suggested. — Thomas Campbell, [Letter to N. H. Finney],** *Millennial Harbinger* **(May 1845): 230;** *italics added***. The above appears as a single paragraph in the original article.**

49. Alexander Campbell, "Response" [to "An Inquirer"], *Millennial Harbinger* **(December 1834): 610;** *italic added***.**

50. David Lipscomb, "Queries," *Gospel Advocate* **17 (April 24, 1879): 260.**

51. Robert Richardson, "Nature of the Christian Doctrine, No. 1," *Millennial Harbinger* **(April 1856): 198.**

Richardson is not to be understood as being critical of creeds *because of their doctrinal content***. Rather, his objection is to "making the Christian faith doctrinal, when, in fact, it is personal."**

52. "The doctrine of Christ, the 'teaching' of that Divine grace or gospel which had brought salvation, was, with them, 'to deny

ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world.' [Titus 2:12] So far, indeed, is the word 'doctrine' from embracing its modern theological sense, in apostolic use, that even when specifically applied to some particular kind of teaching, it has respect, not to articles of belief, but to matters of practical conduct. 'He that transgresseth,' is, with John, the one that 'abideth not in the doctrine of Christ'— the one who was not to be entertained in Christian or even social fellowship; the one to whom no Christian might 'bid God speed,' since, in so doing, he would render himself 'partaker of his evil deeds.' [2 John 9, 10]. — Robert Richardson, "Nature of the Christian Doctrine, No. 2," *Millennial Harbinger* (April 1856): 206–207.

53. In speaking of "doctrine," above, we would be understood as having respect to what are usually termed "religious tenets." In a wide sense, doctrine signifies merely teaching, and in this sense facts themselves are matters of doctrine; that is to say, they are taught or communicated. But in the theological, and what has now, unfortunately, become the popular sense, both "doctrine" and "doctrines" indicate the tenets of a particular religious system, or some abstract and theoretical dogmas, addressed mainly or entirely to the intellectual part of our nature. They are certain "views" taken of what is considered "religious truth," and this truth itself being speculative, the "views" taken of it are mere theories about religion; arranged inferences, or systems of religious ideas. We have, thus, doctrines or theories of the Divine nature, of the Divine government, of faith, of conversion, of justification, of future destiny, of church order, &c. — Richardson, "Nature of the Christian Doctrine, No. 1," 198.

54. "So thoroughly has the Protestant mind been imbued with the notion that the saving efficacy of religion depends upon the accuracy of our views of it, and so completely is it preoccupied

with doctrinal questions and controversies, that it seems almost incapable of entertaining simple views of Christianity, or of contemplating, with just perception, the character of this institution, as it was originally presented to the world by the ministry of the apostles. It seems to be taken for granted, that the errors introduced into Christianity in its early history, have occasioned such a doctrinal fermentation throughout the entire substance of divine truth, that this has lost all its original sweetness and power to nourish the soul, and that it is now only fit to be distilled in the alembic of systematic theology, to obtain the intoxicating and maddening spirit of sectarianism, or the nauseous acerbity of religious bigotry and intolerance. —Ibid., 199.

55. "All these difficulties arise from the two great errors against which we are contending, viz: 1st. Supposing the Christian faith to be doctrinal, and to consist in tenets, when, on the contrary, it is personal, and has respect to Christ himself; and 2ndly. Imagining that the Christian doctrine was mainly designed to make men *think right*, when its great and obvious purpose is to make them *do right*. These two errors have rendered both the faith and the practice of religion doctrinal, and the 'works' carried on by each particular party are, consequently, as sectarian as their belief. They are not 'works of faith and labors of love;' but efforts to maintain theories, and to subserve denominational interests; struggles for power and pre-eminence; conflicts of opinionism, bigotry and pride. But such are not the purposes of Christianity. Its truths and facts are not designed for theoretical, but for practical use. All its principles and teachings are intended to act upon the heart and life of the Christian, in order that he may become a 'doer of the word,' and be 'fruitful in good works.'" —Richardson, "Nature of the Christian Doctrine, No. 2," 208–209; *italics added*.

56. Thomas Campbell, *Declaration and Address,* 12, Loc 153.

57. Richardson, *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell*, **232, Loc 3175.**

58. Alexander Campbell, "The Foundation of Hope and of Christian Union," *Christian Baptist* **9 (April 1824): 178; Burnet edition: 60–61.**

59. "On this view of the matter, I would base something of great consequence to the religious world. . . Perhaps in this one view might be found the only practicable and alone sufficient means of reconciling all the Christian world, and of destroying all partyism and party feelings . . . . But how shall we all speak the same things relating to the Christian religion? Never, indeed, while we add to, or subtract from the words which the Holy Spirit teaches. Never, indeed, while we take those terms out of their scriptural connexions, and either transpose them in place, or confound them with terms not in the book. If I am not greatly mistaken, . . . the adding to, subtracting from, the transposition of, and mingling the terms of the Holy Spirit with those of human contrivance, *is the only cause why all who love the same Saviour are disunited*. **. . . Let, then, but one mould of doctrine be universally adopted, of standard weight, image, and superscription, and all Christians will be one in every visible respect; and then, and not till then, will the kingdom be visibly one. . . . . . And did we all speak the same things we would be as visibly one . . . .** *this unity never can be obtained while any other creed than the sacred writings is known or regarded*. **. . .**

"Men would, on this principle, learn to appreciate and love one another, and to estimate human character on the real standard of piety and moral rectitude. Unfeigned obedience to the Lord, guileless benevolence to all men, and pure Christian affection to the household of faith, would be the principle of appreciation of human character. Not our wild reveries, our orthodox jargon, or our heterodox paradoxes would be of paramount importance. Never can this state be induced until a *pure speech* **be restored—until the language of Canaan be spoken by all the seed of Abraham." —Alexander Campbell, "A Restoration of the**

Ancient Order of Things, No. 7, Purity of Speech," *Christian Baptist* **4 (March 1827): 150–55; Burnet edition: 312–14;** *italics added*.

60. "Distinction between Faith and Opinion," in Richardson, *Principles of the Reformation*, **22, Loc 294;** *italics added*.

61. Ibid., 9, 10, Loc 167; *italics added*.

62. Robert Richardson, "Reformation, No. 5," *Millennial Harbinger* **(January 1848): 36;** *italics added*. **The passage appears as a single paragraph in the original.**

63. "There has been, however, in the present effort for union, no desire to depreciate the value of purity of doctrine. But while it has been duly urged that there can be no Christian union, except it be a union in gospel truth, there has been a freedom from that morbid sensibility upon the subject of *doctrinal views* **which has led to so many fine-spun theological abstractions, and** *created so many divisions* **by unprofitable and unauthorized inquiry. In adopting the scriptures as the only source of religious knowledge, there is an ample, and the only security for purity of doctrine: in the reception of the simple gospel of Christ there is true evangelical faith; and, in the confession of the great fundamental truth of Christianity, there is a divine basis of union, which can be neither overthrown nor controverted. It is in urging these, as the great fixed principles of union and co-operation, that the present reformation has sought to restore to the church, the true foundation laid by Christ and the Apostles; and while securing an essential unity of faith, to grant a just and scriptural liberty of opinion." —Ibid., 37.**

Creeds: Written or Nuncupative

64. When referring to creeds, Campbell occasionally used the

legal term *nuncupative*, meaning unwritten. Campbell appears to have used the term at least eight times: four times in the *Christian Baptist*, twice in the *Harbinger*, and twice in his debate with Rice.

65. Thomas Campbell, *Declaration and Address*, 17, Loc 712. Although the original text is contained in a single paragraph, I have divided it into additional paragraphs to facilitate its comprehension.

It is important to observe in Campbell's statement that the design of doctrine is to *edify* those who were already Christians. For Campbell, one is begotten through the *gospel*, and edified or built up through "the *doctrine* of God's holy word."

66. Spencer Clack, "Letters Addressed to A. Campbell, Letter 1," *Christian Baptist* 1 (August 1827): 15; Burnet edition: 360.

67. Alexander Campbell, "Replication No. II. To Spencer Clack," *Christian Baptist* 2 (September 1827): 40; Burnet edition: 370.

68. Alexander Campbell, "Review of Dr. Noel's Circular, No. 2" *Christian Baptist* 2 (September 1827): 38, 39; Burnet edition: 369; *italics added.*

69. Campbell, *Campbell-Rice Debate,* **762;** *Italics added***.**

70. Ibid., 762; *Italics added***.**

71. Ibid., 806; *italic added.*

72. Ibid., 794.

73. Ibid., 763–64.

74. **Ibid., 784;** *italics added.*

75. **"Now every human creed in Christendom, whether it be long or short, whether it be written or nuncupative, whether it be of "essentials or non-essentials," whether it be composed of five or fifty articles— either adds to, subtracts from, or transposes the words of inspiration, or mingles things of divine and human contrivance together. No such volume, no such articles can be** *the form* **or a form of sound words. Every creed is a new** *mould* **or doctrine, and into whatever mould metal is cast, when moulded it must assume the size and impress thereof. . . . We have but one apostolic** *mould of doctrine* **[Romans 6:17] in the world, and all the sons of men cannot construct a mould of doctrine like it." — Alexander Campbell,** *Christian Baptist* **8 (March 1827): 152; Burnet edition: 312–13.**

76. **"Q. 125. But if private opinions are expressed, are they not to become matters of discipline?**

"A. By no means, unless a person express them for the sake of compelling others to receive them, or to exclude them from their fellowship if they do not receive them. In that case he is answerable, not for his opinions, but his practices. He is a factionist, is seeking his own honor, making a party, and on these accounts sins against the christian constitution; and such a person, after a second admonition, is to be rejected,

"Q 126. Are not opinions purely intellectual matters, and not to be regarded as moral principles?

"A. They are purely intellectual matters, and ought to be so regarded; but when any person makes them principles of action, he places them upon the same footing with divine oracles, and demands as much for his own reasonings as for the express commandments of the Great King." —Alexander Campbell, "Extra, No. 4," *Millennial Harbinger* **(August 1832): 355.**

77. "We abjure creeds, simply as substitutes, directly or indirectly substitutes, for the book of inspiration. In other respects, we have no objection whatever to any people publishing their tenets, or views, or practices to the world. I have no more objections to writing my opinions than I have to speaking them. But, mark it well, it is the making of such compends of views in the ecclesiastic sense, *creeds* **(that is,** *terms of communion or bonds of union*)**— I say again, as ecclesiastic documents, as terms of exclusion and reception of members, we abjure them. . . . we solemnly abjure them, regardless of their contents,** *whether orthodox or heterodox*." **—Campbell,** *Campbell-Rice Debate*, **784.**

78. "Our charities are, then, more extensive than those of my opponent. We have not so many dogmas in our creed. All these persons, *of so many and so contradictory opinions*, **weekly meet around our Lord's table in hundreds of churches all over the land. Our bond of union is, faith in the slain Messiah, in his death for our sins, and his resurrection for our justification. Therefore, we acknowledge nothing among us but Christ and him crucified.** *We do not talk of old opinions***— we desire to be absorbed in the Lord messiah, as made unto us 'wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.'" —Ibid., 785;** *italics added*.

79. Ibid.; *italics added*.

80. "We long since learned the lesson, that to draw a well-defined boundary between *faith* **and** *opinion*, **and, while we earnestly contend for** *the faith*, **to allow perfect freedom of** *opinion*, **and of the expression of opinion, is the true philosophy of church union, and the sovereign antidote against heresy [division]. Hence, in our communion at this moment, we have as**

strong Calvinists and as strong Arminians, as any, I presume, in this house— certainly many that have been such. Yet we go hand in hand, in one faith, one hope, and in all Christian union and co-operation in the great cause of personal sanctification and human redemption. . . .

"It is not the object of our efforts to make men think alike on a thousand themes. Let men think as they please on any matters of human opinion, and upon "doctrines of religion," provided only they hold the head Christ, and keep his commandments. I have learned, not only the theory, but the fact— that if you wish opinionism to cease or to subside, you must not call up and debate every thing that men think or say. You may debate any thing into consequence, or you may, by a dignified silence, waste it into oblivion." —Ibid., 797.

81. Ibid., 798–799; *italics added*.

82. Ibid., 799.

83. Alexander Campbell, "Dr. Thomas," *Millennial Harbinger* **(September 1843): 419;** *italics added*.

84. W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Basis of Authority," *Mission Messenger* **(November 1962): 1.**

85. Ibid.

86. Ibid., 2.

87. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Analysis of Apostasy," *Mission Messenger* **(April 1965): 49.**

88. W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Moment of Truth," *Mission Messenger* **(October 1964): 147.**

89. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Authority of the Word," *Mission*

Messenger **(September 1969): 131.**

90. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Authority of the Word," *Mission Messenger* **(September 1969): 132.**

91. Ketcherside, "Another Gospel," *The Twisted Scriptures*, **28–29, Loc 530.**

Campbell's first reference to "scrap doctors" may be found in his article "The Textuaries," *Christian Baptist*, **5 (Dec. 5, 1825): 105. It may also be found in his article on "Regeneration,"** *Millennial Harbinger*, **"Extra, No. 6" (August 1833): 373.**

92. Ketcherside, *The Twisted Scriptures*, **"Walking In The Light," 129, Loc 2018.**

93. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Restoring Restoration," *Mission Messenger* **(August 1961): 2–3.**

94. Ibid., 6.

95. Ibid., 6–7.

96. Ibid., 8.

97. W. Carl Ketcherside, "About Opinions," *Mission Messenger* **(October 1973): 145.**

98. Ibid., 146.

99. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Instrumental Music (2)," *Mission Messenger* **(June 1958): 5.**

100. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Facing the Future," *Mission Messenger* **(January 1959): 11.**

101. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Turning on the Light," *Mission Messenger* **(September 1959): 5.**

102. **Ibid., 7.**

103. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Church of Christ Party,"** *Mission Messenger* **(December 1959): 3.**

104. **Ketcherside, "The Moment of Truth,"** *Mission Messenger* **(October 1964): 147.**

Chapter 8: According to the Pattern

1. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "According to the Pattern,"** *Mission Messenger* **(February 1970): 17.**

2. **This list was compiled directly from Ketcherside's writings.**

3. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Lapsing Into Latin,"** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1967): 37.**

4. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Approach to Authority,"** *Mission Messenger* **(July 1966): 118.**

5. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Money Pattern,"** *Mission Messenger* **(July 1970), 97.**

6. **Ibid.**

7. **Ibid.**

8. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Our Personal Pattern,"** *Mission Messenger* **(March 1970): 34.**

9. **Ibid.**

10. **Ibid., 34.**

11. **Ibid., 41.**

12. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Sources of Our Patterns"** *Mission*

Messenger, **(June 1970): 81.**

13. Ibid., 82.

14. Ibid., 85.

15. Ibid., 89.

MODIFY BELOW

16. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Three Great Errors" in In the Beginning (St. Louis: Mission Messenger, 1980), 71–73, Loc 1142.

17.W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Recovery of Reason," *Mission Messenger* **(February 1972): 27.**

18. E. W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Supper Pattern," *Mission Messenger* **(May 1970): 66ff.**

19. I was present when James P. Miller debated Guy N. Woods over institutionalism— August 29–September 1, 1966, in Montgomery, Alabama. In that debate, Miller referred to monies collected by the church as "sanctified" funds. Given their status, he went on to explain, their use must be restricted to that set forth in the New Testament pattern.

20.W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Money Pattern," *Mission Messenger* **(July 1970): ??.**

21. Ibid.

22.Ibid, 99.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.

25. **Ibid., 99–100.**

26. **Ibid., 101.**

In support of his position, Ketcherside then quotes from *Barnes' Notes*, **Meyer's** *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Epistles to the Corinthians*, **G. G. Findlay, B.A., in** *The Expositor's Greek New Testament*, **F. W. Grosheide, Th.D., in** *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, **Dr. Herman Olshausen, in his** *Biblical Commentary*, **R. C. H. Lenski, in his** *Bible Commentary*, **Marvin R. Vincent, D.D., in his** *Word Studies in the New Testament*, **Arthur S. Way, in** *The Letters of Saint Paul*, **F. Godet, in his** *Commentary on First Corinthians*, **W. E. Vine in his** *Commentary on First Corinthians*, **Marcus Dods, D.D., in** *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, *The Pulpit Commentary*, *Scott's Bible Commentary*, **John Peter Lange, D.D., in his** *Commentary on the Bible*, *The Comprehensive Bible Commentary*, *The Critical Commentary*, **edited by F. C. Cook, M.A., Canon of Exeter, D. D. Whedon, D.D., in** *Commentary on the New Testament*, **and** *A Catholic Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*.

27. **Ibid., 101–103.**

28. **Ibid., 103.**

29. **Ibid., 103–104.**

30. **Ibid., 104.**

31. **Ibid., 105.**

32. **Ibid.**

33. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Name Pattern,"** *Mission Messenger* **(August 1970): 113–14.**

34. **Ibid., 114.**

35. **Ibid., 115.**

36. **Ibid.**

The excerpt is from: Alexander Campbell, "To an Independent Baptist," *Christian Baptist* **10 (May 1826): 204; Burnet edition: 238; In the original the excerpt is found in a single paragraph.**

37. **Ibid., 117–118.**

The quote by G. C. Brewer was cited by Ketcherside as taken from "The Church and Sectarianism," *Abilene Christian College Lectures*, **1934.**

38. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "One God,"** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1974): 142**

39. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Worship and Money,"** *Mission Messenger* **(November 1966): 177.**

40. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Acts of Worship,"** *Mission Messenger* **(October 1966): 161.**

41. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Holy Places and Days"** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1966): 146–47.**

42. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Holy Places and Days"** *Mission Messenger* **(September 1966): 146–47.**

43. **Ibid., 147. The quote by L. Duchesne, is from a translation of the French title,** *Origines du culte chrétien* **(1889):** *Christian Worship: Its Origin and Evolution*, **Third English Edition (London: SPCK, 1910), 47.**

44. **Ibid.**

45. **Ibid., 148.**

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid., 149.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid., 149–150.

50. Ketcherside, "Our Personal Pattern," 34.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid., 35.

53. Ibid., 34.

54. Ibid., 35, 36.

55. Ibid., 36.

56. Ibid., 36, 37.

57. Ibid., 38, 39.

58. Ibid., 39, 41. The passage in 1 John 4:10, 11 is quoted from the New English Bible.

59. Ibid., 42.

60. Ibid.

61. Ibid., 42, 43.

62. Ibid., 43.

63. Ibid.

64. Ibid.

65. Ibid.

66. Ibid.

Chapter 9: Divine Love: The Fellowship of the Spirit

1. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Another Gospel," *Mission Messenger* (December 1974): 189.

2. The word "speaking" is not in the original text, and is often translated as "holding" or following" the truth in love, which, in my view, is more to Paul's point in this context. One Portuguese translation has the English equivalent of "following the truth in love."

3. "There is a principle in every thing instituted. And all the principles of obedience, all the principles of action, how numerous soever we may suppose them, are reducible to one great principle, sometimes called *the new commandment*. Now, says Paul, "the end or object of the commandment is *love* out of a pure heart, out of a good conscience, and from faith unfeigned." The Christian Institution creates in the heart of man this love. It gives it birth and being. It is a love of a higher order, of a sublime genius, than any former age or economy could produce. The love for God which Judaism implanted and matured, was love for a benefactor, a preserver, or, if you please, a creator; but love for a Redeemer for a Saviour, is of a loftier birth and character. Love for one that has redeemed from everlasting death, who bestows immortality, is a love which none could feel who did not understand the doctrine of life and immortality.

"The dominion of love is the dominion of favor, and its service the easiest conceivable. Hence the liberty and perfect freedom felt in slavery to Jesus Christ. All who serve any favorite principle feel themselves *free*. The man who toils harder than any menial bondman ever did, provided he toil in the service of some grateful principle, (avarice, or ambition, for example,) he feels perfect liberty. Liberty is all in the mind. Hence the slaves

of Jesus, or the slaves of love, are the verist freemen in the world. This is the grandeur of the Christian scheme, that it sets men in love with such principles and such a person; that makes virtue and goodness almost as necessary as the Pagans' fate, and yet as free and easy as the action of the heart or the labor of the lungs.

"There is no serving from memory in the service of love. The Jews required a good memory rather than good judgment. Children act from memory before they act from judgment. Hence the memory is strong and the judgment weak in youth. In manhood the judgment is strong and the memory becomes weaker. In the religious minority of the world the religious acted from memory rather than from judgment or pure principle. Let no man infer that I exclude *principle from* the saints of former ages, in the vulgar acceptation of that term. I mean no such thing. But the principles of christianity, the principles of action which the love of God developed in the mission of Jesus, and the glory to be revealed in us at the resurrection, are so transcendant as to eclypse every thing like principle flowing from love or gratitude to a creator, or benefactor, or guardian as the God of Israel was revealed to the jews. Their outward services, their yoke of bondage, the elements of the world under which they groaned, and clear monuments of the slavery of *the letter*, and of the want of what we here call principles. I said, the service of love is not the service of memory. Love is a master whose power is felt without recollection. Omnipresent and omnipotent too in moral influence. It is the moral principle of gravity and the moral universe, and, like the physical attraction, controls every thing.

"The christian scheme is the wisdom and power of God in producing this principle. When created its aliment is the will of God. On the sincere milk of the word it feeds. This nourishes and strengthens it. To its government the new man is subjected. Hence the obedience of faith is also the obedience of love. There requires no precepts nor commands, with a penalty, other than

that the enjoyment of this love of God and his favor necessarily requires conformity. Hence all the exhortations to religious and moral observances are drawn from the love of God to us.

"This is the great principle of the new Institution; although the two great commandments of the law required the love of the whole heart to God and benevolence equal to self-love, it did not afford the strength nor the motive to call them forth. Hence it was a condemnatory precept, rather than a quickening principle. But now the love of God, shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit, excites to an activity, and imparts an energy which the law could not do. —Alexander Campbell, "Essays on the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian Ages, No. 16," *Christian Baptist* **12 (July 1830): 288–289.**

It should be noted that while Campbell's understanding of divine love appears not to be identical with that of Ketcherside in every detail, the similarity of its effect is apparent.

4. Thomas Campbell, "Christianity," *Millennial Harbinger* **(November 1844): 489–490.**

5. Alexander Campbell, "Letters to England, No. 4," *Millennial Harbinger* **(September 1837): 424.**

6. "This is not a prayer, as is commonly supposed, for ecclesiastical, or, as it is usually termed, Christian union, except so far as this may be involved as a result of that unity which is here so earnestly and touchingly implored. The prayer to the Father is, 'that they may be one as we are'— 'that they may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us.' This is not *union* **merely, but** *unity***; and the mode by which this spiritual unity is effected, is distinctly stated to be** *the in-dwelling of Christ***. 'I, in them, and thou, in me, that they may be made perfect in one.' As the Father dwelt in Christ by the Spirit, so it is thus that Christ dwells in his people. It is 'through**

him' that we have 'access by one Spirit unto the Father.' It is 'in him' that we are 'builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit.' 'Ye are not in the flesh,' says Paul to the Romans, 'but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you,' he proceeds, thus using 'Christ' interchangeably with 'Spirit of God,' and 'Spirit of Christ,' in the preceding sentences. 'Hereby know we,' says John, 'that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.' It is through the in-dwelling of the Spirit of Christ, then, that this *unity* was to be attained, and this remarkable petition of Christ, if it be not in fact, the formal fulfilment of the promise just before made to the disciples: 'I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever,' is, in *effect*, a prayer for the impartation to believers, throughout all time, of that Spirit, by which, alone, *Christian unity* can be established and maintained. Hence, Paul exhorts Christians to be careful to preserve 'the unity (ἑνότης) of the Spirit, by the bond of peace.'" —Robert Richardson, "Christian Unity, No. 1," *Millennial Harbinger* (February 1859): 65–66.

7. W. Carl Ketcherside, *Heaven Help Us* (Cincinnati: New Life, 1974), 83–86; Kindle edition (SCM e-Prints, 2010), Loc 1088.

8. Ketcherside, *In the Beginning* , Loc 31.

9. Ibid., 129–131.

10. Ibid., 132–133.

11. Ibid., 135–136.

12. Ibid., 139.

13. Ibid., 141–144.

14. Ibid., 153–154.

15. **Ibid., 187–192.**

16. **Ibid., 194–195.**

17. **Ibid., 197. This quotation originally appeared in "The Foundation of Hope and of Christian Union,"** *Christian Baptist* **9 (April 1824): 177; Burnet edition: 60.**

18. **Ibid.**

19. **Ibid., 200–201.**

20. **Ibid., 212–213.**

21. **W. Carl Ketcherside,** *The Parable of Telstar and Other Talks* **(St. Louis: Mission Messenger, 1972), 60–62.**

22. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Agape: Foundation of Christian Fellowship,"** *Restoration Review* **(February 1963): 45–46.**

23. **Ibid., 47. Nygren's book is currently available for free download from the archive.org website.**

24. **Ibid., 48–49.**

25. **Ibid., 49–50.**

26. **Ibid., 54–55.**

27. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Ground of Christian Fellowship,"** *Restoration Review* **(March 1963): 71–72.**

28. **Ibid., 72–73.**

29. **Ibid., 73–74.**

30. **Ibid., 80.**

The quote from Campbell is found in "The Foundation of Hope

and of Christian Union," *Christian Baptist* **9 (April 5, 1824): 177.**

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid., 81–83.

33. Ibid., 87.

34. Ibid., 87–88.

35. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Fellowship," *Restoration Review* **(February 1973): 22–29.**

Chapter 10: Unity in Diversity

1. Robert Richardson, "Reformation, No. 6," *Millennial Harbinger* **(February 1848): 74–75.**

2. Barton W. Stone, [untitled], *Christian Messenger* **9 (August 1830): 202.**

3. Barton W. Stone, "Letter To J. C.," *Christian Messenger* **10 (September 1830): 226.**

4. Barton W. Stone, "Reply" [to James Henshall], *Christian Messenger* **12 (December 1830): 27.**

5. Barton W. Stone, "The Millennial Harbinger," *Christian Messenger* **12 (December 1830): 275, 276.**

6. Barton W. Stone, "Union," *Christian Messenger* **8 (August 1831): 185.**

7. Barton W. Stone, "A Hearty Tribute to Merit," *Christian Messenger* **9 (January 1844): 270.**

8. Ibid., 272.

9. Thomas Campbell, *Declaration and Address*, **41, Loc 1321. The original excerpt is contained in a single paragraph.**

10. Alexander Campbell, "Remarks on Confessions of Faith," *Christian Baptist* **2 (September 1824): 43; Burnet edition: 93.**

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid., 43, 44; Burnet edition: 93.

13. Ibid., 44; Burnet edition: 93.

14. Alexander Campbell, "A Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things, No. 2," *Christian Baptist* **2 (March 1825): 154; Burnet edition: 134.**

15. Ibid., 155; Burnet edition: 134.

16. Alexander Campbell, "Reply" to letter from R. B. S., *Christian Baptist* **9 (April 1826): 183; Burnet edition: 230.**

17. Alexander Campbell, "To an Independent Baptist," *Christian Baptist* **10 (May 1826): 201; Burnet edition: 237.**

18. Ibid., 202, 203; Burnet edition: 237–38.

19. Ibid., 203; Burnet edition: 238.

20. Ibid., 204; Burnet edition: 238.

21. Ibid., 204, 205; Burnet edition: 238. The original is contained in a single paragraph.

22. Alexander Campbell, "Review of the History of Churches, No. 1," *Christian Baptist* **10 (May 1828): 244; Burnet edition: 442.**

23. Alexander Campbell, "Millennium, No. 2," *Millennial Harbinger* **(April 1830): 145;** *italics added*.

24. Ibid., 150.

25. Alexander Campbell, "Remarks on the Above," *Christian Baptist* **11 (June 1830): 262–263; Burnet edition: 651.**

Note: The quote, "Tenth or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike" is a line from "An Essay on Man," by Alexander Pope.

26. Ibid., 263; Burnet edition: 651.

27. David M. Thompson, "Churches of Christ in Great Britain and Ireland," in *The Stone-Campbell Encyclopedia***, ed. Douglas A. Foster et al. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004), 369.**

28. Alexander Campbell, "To Mr. William Jones, of London, Letter 4," *Millennial Harbinger* **(March 1835): 112.**

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.

31. Robert Richardson, "Reformation, No. 6," *Millennial Harbinger* **(February 1848): 73.**

32. Ibid.; The above appears in a single paragraph in the original.

33. Ibid., 74.

34. Ibid., 74–75.

35. Ibid., 75.

36. Ibid., 75–76. The original excerpt is contained in a single paragraph.

37. Ibid., 75; *italics added***.**

38. Ibid., 76–77.

39. Ibid., 77; *italics added*. The original excerpt is contained in a single paragraph.

40. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Religion of Fact," *Mission Messenger* (February 1958): 1.

41. Ibid., 1–2; *italics added*.

42. Ibid., 2–3.

43. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Searching for the Answer," *Mission Messenger* (January 1960): 2–3.

44. Ibid., 4–5; *italics added*.

45. Ibid., 6–7; *italics added*.

46. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Opinions and Unity," *Mission Messenger* (November 1960): 11; *italics added*,

47. Ibid., 11–12; *italics added*.

48. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Unity in Diversity," *Mission Messenger* (January 1961): 7; *italics added*.

49. Ibid., 9.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid., 9–10; *italics added*.

52. Ibid., 10.

53. Ibid., 11.

54. Ibid., 11–12.

55. W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Plea for Unity," *Mission Messenger* **(May 1961): 3;** *italics added*.

56. Ibid., 5.

57. Ibid., 5–6.

58. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Restoration Astray," *Mission Messenger* **(October 1961): 1**

59. Ibid., 2.

60. Ibid.

61. Ibid., 3.

62. Ibid., 5.

The statement by Aylette Raines may be found in: Richardson, Robert, *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell*, **Vol. 2, (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1870): 248; Kindle edition, Stone-Campbell e-Prints, 2011, Loc 10783.**

63. Ibid., 6.

64. Ibid., 6–7.

65. Ibid., 8.

66. Ibid., 9.

67. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Getting Untangled," *Mission Messenger* **(August 1962): 1.**

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid., 2.

70. **Ibid., 3.**

71. **Ibid.**

72. **Ibid.**

73. **Ibid., 4.**

74. **Ibid., 4–6;** *italics added.*

75. **Ibid., 6.**

76. **Ibid.**

77. **Ibid., 6–7;** *italics added***.**

78. **Ibid., 7–8;** *italics added***.**

79. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Factional Flames,"** *Mission Messenger* **(April 1962): 1.**

80. **Ibid.**

81. **Ibid., 2–3.**

82. **Ibid., 3–4.**

83. **Ibid., 4.**

84. **The full text of this document may be freely downloaded in PDF format at: https://icotb.org/english_resources/?folder_id=9**

85. **Ibid., 9.**

86. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Longest Prayer,"** *Mission Messenger* **(January 1975): 2.**

87. **Ibid., 9.**

88. **Ibid., 10;** *italics added.*

89. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "About Symphonies,"** *Ensign* **8 (September 1985): 148.**

90. **Ibid., 148–49.**

91. **Ibid., 149–50.**

Chapter 11: Renewal Through Recovery

1. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Church of Christ Party,"** *Mission Messenger* **(December 1959): 1.**

2. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Restoration Principle,"** *Mission Messenger* **(July 1967): 98–99;** *italics added.*

This aphorism or catchphrase appears in some eighteen of Ketcherside's essays, from 1967 through 1987, as "renewal through recovery of the apostolic proclamation, purpose and power," or in some shorten form of the same.

In 1979, Stanley K. McDaniel was awarded the Ph.D. by the Department of Speech Communication at Indiana University. His doctoral dissertation was titled "Renewal Through Recovery of the Apostolic Proclamation, Purpose, and Power: The Invention of W. Carl Ketcherside." The word "invention," as used in the title, refers to the first of the five classic Canons of Rhetoric. Invention is the process of developing and refining arguments with which to persuade others. Chapters 5–7 of McDaniel's dissertation are directly related to the topic of this chapter and are highly recommended. From his interviews with Ketcherside, McDaniel reports numerous statements by Ketcherside which are not documented elsewhere. The recordings of those interviews may be found in the holdings of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society, in Bethany, West Virginia. The dissertation has been uploaded to the "Ketcherside Collection" of archive.org. For the present it may also be found

under "Books Online" at unity-in-diversity.org.

3. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Restoring a Movement," *Mission Messenger* **(October 1967): 158; The quotation is from Thomas Campbell,** *Declaration and Address***, 23; Kindle edition: 364.**

Ketcherside uses the phrase "a project to unite the Christians in all of the sects" over thirty times in his books and essays, and occasionally attributes it to Alexander Campbell. It is only in 1980, on page 63 of his book, *In the Beginning***, that he identifies it as something Campbell said in 1835—** *Christianity Restored* **(p. 7). A second edition of that work was published in 1839 under the title** *The Christian System***, where the quotation is found on page 6. The phrase Ketcherside uses is a concise distillation of Campbell's longer statement:**

"A deep and an abiding impression that the power, the consolations and joys— the holiness and happiness of Christ's religion were lost in the forms and ceremonies, in the speculations and conjectures, in the feuds and bickerings of sects and schisms, originated a project many years ago for uniting the sects, or rather the *Christians* **in all the sects, upon a clear and scriptural bond of union— upon having a "***thus saith the Lord***," either in express terms, or in approved precedent, "for every article of faith, and item of religious practice." This was offered in the year 1809, in the "Declaration and Address" of the Washington Association, Pennsylvania. It was first tendered to the parties that confessed the Westminster creed; but equally submitted to all Protestants of every name, making faith in Christ and obedience to him the only** *test* **of Christian character, and the only** *bond* **of church union, communion, and co-operation. It was indeed approved by all; but adopted and practiced by none, except the few, or part of the few, who made the overture."**

4. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Hail and Farewell," *Mission Messenger* (December 1975): 184.

5. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Renewal Through Recovery, No. 3," *Restoration Review* (May 1983): 92.

6. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Renewal Through Recovery, No. 1," *Restoration Review* (January 1983): 11.

7. Ibid., 12.

8. Ibid., 12.

9. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Renewal Through Recovery, No. 2," *Restoration Review* (March 1983): 54.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid., 54–56.

12. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Renewal Through Recovery," *Ensign* (March 1985): 47–48.

13. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Let It Come," *Ensign* 7 (August 1987): 125.

14. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Through Recovery," *Ensign* 8 (September 1987): 143–144.

The sentence "It was a squabble over more words" appears to contain a typographical oversight. I changed the word "more" to "mere," which appears to be the intended meaning.

15. Ibid., 144–145.

16. Ibid., 145.

17. W. Carl Ketcherside, "Harvard Experience," *Mission Messenger* (June 1969): 88–89.

18. **Ketcherside, "The Restoration Principle," 99.**

19. **Ibid., 100–101;** *italics added***.**

20. **Ibid., 101.**

21. **Ibid.**

22. **Ibid.**

23. **Ibid., 101–102.**

24. **Ibid., 102.**

25.**Ibid.**

26. **Ibid., 102–103.**

27. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Proclamation,"** *Ensign* **9 (October 1987): 163.**

28. **Ibid., 165.**

29. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Renewal Through Recovery, No. 6,"** *Restoration Review* **9 (November 1983): 173.**

30. **Ibid.**

31. **Ibid., 174.**

32. **Ibid.**

33. **Ibid., 174–175.**

34. **Ibid., 175.**

35. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Purport and Purpose,"** *Ensign* **10 (November 1987): 183.**

36. **Ibid., 183–184.**

37. **Ibid., 184–185.**

38. **Ibid., 185.**

39. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "Renewal Through Recovery, No. 7,"** *Restoration Review* **(January 1984): 216.**

40. **Ibid., 217.**

41. **Ibid., 217–218.**

42. **Ibid., 218–219.**

43. **W. Carl Ketcherside, "The Power of God,"** *Ensign* **11 (December 1987): 204.**

44. **Ibid., 205.**

45. **Of whether the essay was ever published, I am unaware. However, the proximity of the time it was composed to that of the death of his wife would lead me to believe it was interrupted by her passing, and never completed.**

APPENDIX

Main Menu

- Annotated List of Works by W. Carl Ketcherside
- Nell Ketcherside's Travelog
- Image of Letter from Carl to Leroy
- "Some Thoughts on Unity" by Reuel Lemmons
- "Preachers or Teachers" by David Lipscomb
- "The One-Man Pastor System in the *Gospel Advocate* from 1855–1909"
- Eulogy for W. Carl Ketcherside, 1908–1989, by Leroy Garrett
- Image of Grave Sites for Carl and Nell

THE PRINCIPAL WORKS OF

W. Carl Ketcherside

Appendix

Collections of Radio Sermons

Radio Talks **(1944)**
Radio Talks **(Number Two) (1944)**
Seeking the Old Paths **(1944)**
The Sermon on the Mount **(1944)**
Clean Churches **(1945)**
The Sound of the Trumpet **(1945)**
Timely Topics **(1945)**
The Bible vs. False Theories **(1945)**
Shadows **(1946)**
Storm Clouds Over America **(1946)**
Actions in Acts **(1946)**
Happy Homes **(1946)**
Proven Proverbs **(1947)**

Other Works

Fighting Christians **(1942): Written during World War II, this 26-page booklet addresses the issue facing Christians as to whether they could scripturally engage in what was referred to as "carnal" (as opposed to 'spiritual") warfare." Taking direct aim at the position of David Lipscomb, who rejected the idea**

that the Christian could participate in civil government or in carnal warfare, Ketcherside parsed all the arguments to which his opponents appealed, citing Foy E. Wallace in his defense. Ketcherside maintained that if the sword belongs to the civil government, that he is party to its sword-wielding by virtue of being a part of that government. While expressing an awareness of the seriousness of recommending that one "take up arms in defense of democracy and the American way of life," he was convinced that such was the right thing to do. The book was published by Mission Messenger.

Concerning Christian Colleges **(1945): In this 56-page booklet the author asserts that the scriptural responsibility of the church for the religious education of its members and their children cannot be usurped by a human institution. Responding to arguments in favor of Christian colleges by A. G. Hobbs—included as chapter 2 of this book, Ketcherside makes his case for a church-based system of religious education. "No Bible college was ever born of faith in God's plan," he wrote. "We must create again the concept of the church as God's Bible college for the training of the Christian workers." A portion of the booklet is taken up in opposition to the one-man pastor system which, according to author, relies upon the Christian colleges for training. It was his conviction that without the colleges, the pastor system would not persist. The book was published by Mission Messenger.**

A Clean Church **(1948): A series of essays on church discipline in which the author first describes the problem created by public sin within the local church and then outlines what he considers to be the appropriate approach to correcting the problem. Examines references in the NT scriptures to maintaining public order at the congregational level. Although this title has since been reprinted by other publishers, the position set forth is that of an earlier period in the author's life and does not reflect the views he came to hold in his later years. The book contains 165 pages divided among the following 14**

chapters: Preface (Why I wrote this book), Sin in the Camp, What is Discipline, Personal Offences, Going to Law, Public Offences (Restoration of Offenders), The Effect of Discipline, Walking Disorderly, The Corinthian Example, The Results at Corinth, Congregational Autonomy, Principles of Procedure, Objections Considered, How to Avoid Public Discipline. The book was published originally by Mission Messenger.

Ketcherside-Porter Debate **(Ozark, Missouri, March 23-26, 1937). Ketcherside's introduction to public disputation took place when he was only 29 years old. Rue Porter was approaching his 48th birthday and had already engaged in twenty-five debates. Propositions for the debate were related to the "erection and maintenance of schools or colleges . . . for the purpose of teaching the Bible," and the "erection and maintenance of orphans homes . . . for the purpose of . . . caring for orphan children." Porter maintained that they were both authorized by the New Testament, whereas Ketcherside denied that such was the case. D. Austen Sommer reviewed the debate in** *Macedonian Call* **for April 1937, p. 2. The** *Gospel Advocate* **announced the upcoming debate, on page 7 of the February 23rd issue for 1937, but there appears to have been no follow-up report. Ketcherside fills several pages of his autobiography providing background and subsequent insight into the debate (see, "Chapter 3. Debates at Home & Fellowship Abroad: The Debating Years Begin"). The book, containing 174 pages, was printed by Rush Printing Co., Barnard, Missouri, 1937.**

Wallace-Ketcherside Debate **(Paragould, Arkansas, June 30-July 4, 1952): The first of two debates with G. K Wallace, of Temple Terrace, Florida, which took place from June 30— July 4, 1952, in a field near Paragould, Arkansas, from which it came to be called "the cow pasture debate." The debate covered four propositions: (1) The employment of a preacher to preach for the congregation as now practiced by the church of Christ, at 2nd and Walnut Streets, in Paragould, Ark., is scriptural. (2) The New Testament authorizes an evangelist to exercise**

authority in a congregation which he has planted until men are qualified and appointed as bishops. (3) The organization, by Christians, of schools such as Freed-Hardeman College is in harmony with the New Testament Scriptures. (4) The organization, by Christians, of schools such as Freed-Hardeman College is contrary to the New Testament Scriptures. (Ketcherside denied propositions 1 and 3 and affirmed 2 and 4.) The first proposition was taken up over two nights, whereas the remaining three were covered in one night each. Although Ketcherside never substantially changed any of the views he expressed during these debates, his subsequent understanding of the significance of our differing views of scripture prevented him from ever again regarding them as tests of spiritual fellowship. The book, published by Telegram Book Company in Longview, Texas, contains 286 pages.

Wallace-Ketcherside Debate **(St. Louis, Missouri, October 26-30, 1953). The follow-up debate with G. K. Wallace took place the following year in St. Louis, MO, October 26-30. The St. Louis debate covered the same propositions as in the Arkansas debate. The book containing the debate was published by the same company, Telegram Book Company, as the Arkansas debate. It contains 278 pages.**

Colley-Ketcherside Debate **(Dallas, Texas, December 1-4, 1953): The transcription of a debate held in the Beckley Theater in Dallas, Texas, December 1-4, 1953, with Flavil L. Colley over the question of whether securing a preacher as a minister of a congregation having elders, as generally practiced among the Churches of Christ in Dallas, is scriptural— a position which Ketcherside denied. Ketcherside's concern in the debate may best be reflected in his contention that "every man who has the ability to teach must have the right to exercise that gift, and he has an equal right with every other who possesses the same gift, if he is faithful." The debate fills 211 pages and was originally published in 1954 by Flavil L. Colley of Dallas, Texas.**

The Royal Priesthood **(First edition, 1956): This is the first book written by the author following the radical change in his understanding of spiritual fellowship and the unity of all believers, which began in 1951. The first edition, released in November of 1956, was followed in 1969 by a second, revised edition. The latter was included in the printed twelve volume edition of** *The Writings of W. Carl Ketcherside***, published by College Press in 1997. The book examines the biblical teaching relative to the priesthood of all believers. The first half traces the necessity of a priesthood, its nature, rise and development under the Patriarchal and Jewish dispensations, and its culmination and perfection in the present era, styled "the ends of the ages." The second half of the book contains an analysis and reply to the Roman Catholic postulate of a special priesthood or clergy as set forth by Dr. John A. O'Brien in** *The Priesthood: A Divine Institution***. Prior to the publication of** *The Royal Priesthood***, Ketcherside announced, "The chapters on 'Priesthood and Ministry' and 'The Royal Priesthood' will commend themselves to all lovers of restoration." The first edition of the book, published by Mission Messenger, contained 193 pages. The second edition, by the same publisher, contains 199 pages. This is one of only two books that Ketcherside ever copyrighted (to protect copyrighted material quoted from a third party). The other was** *The Kingdom of the Messiah***.**

The Kingdom of the Messiah **(Print edition, 1957; Kindle edition, 2011): Traces the concept of the kingdom of God through the Old Testament, shows how God prepared for its coming, and discusses its nature and character. It is a study of the rule of heaven in all ages and contains an analysis of Revelation 20, concerning which the author states: "In regard to the millennium, it will establish that I do not hold the view that our Lord will return to earth and reign here a thousand years. I give the reasoning by which I reach that conclusion." The book contains 222 pages and was published by Mission Messenger. It is one of only two books every copyrighted by the author— the other being** *The Royal Priesthood***. Three of his other books were**

published and copyrighted by Standard Publishing Company.

Thoughts on Fellowship **(Bound volume of** *Mission Messenger* **for 1957-58)**

Covenants of God **(Bound volume of** *Mission Messenger* **for 1959-60)**

The Path of Peace **(Bound volume of** *Mission Messenger* **for 1961-62)**

The Unity of the Spirit **(Bound volume of** *Mission Messenger* **for 1963)**

The Brotherhood of Faith **(Bound volume of** *Mission Messenger* **for 1964)**

The Twisted Scriptures **(Bound volume of** *Mission Messenger* **for 1965)**

Deep Roots **(Bound volume of** *Mission Messenger***, 1966)**

Apples of Gold **(Bound volume of** *Mission Messenger***, 1967)**

God's Community **(Bound volume of** *Mission Messenger***, 1968)**

The Royal Priesthood **(Second edition, 1969; Kindle edition, 2011):** *See above description of first edition.*

Simple Trusting Faith **(Print edition, 1969; Kindle edition, 2011): At the time this volume was published, the author wrote: "For a number of years I wanted to write . . . a volume of apologetics written in popular style so that college young people would read it. When the time came to write I decided that I would deal with the theme of God's existence, the manifestation of the Word in flesh, the virgin birth, the question of miracles, and the present possession of eternal life. I do not hold that we**

must discard all the values of the arguments made by our fathers for the genuineness and authenticity of the word." The thesis of the book, he had explained in a pre-publication announcement, is "that we need not surrender all of the apologetic approaches of the past in this intellectual age with its theories of relativism and liberalism." It is the intention of the book, he further explained, "to build faith and strengthen conviction" by providing "a clear depiction of the reasons for our belief in God, the genuineness and authenticity of the scriptures, the miracles by which the claims of the apostles were validated and other related matters." Hundreds of copies of this title were sent, free of charge, to college and university students who personally requested a copy from the publisher, Mission Messenger. The book, published by Mission Messenger, contains 148 pages.

Christian Commandos **(Bound volume of** *Mission Messenger* **for 1969)**

Our Living Pattern **(Bound volume of** *Mission Messenger* **for 1970)**

One Great Chapter **(Bound volume of** *Mission Messenger* **for 1971)**

The Parable of the Telstar **(1972; 2012, Kindle Edition): Contains 16 essays taken from speeches given by the author throughout the country in 1971. The title of the book is taken from the first talk. "The Parable of Telstar" is assumed to be the kind of talk Jesus would make today to a Rotary Club luncheon, or to a high school assembly, which, in years past, was permitted. It is a parable up in the clouds and down to earth. The second talk, "My Only Creed," was made at the Unity Forum, conducted at Atlanta Christian College. The next four talks, given at Camp Wi-Ne-Ma, represent an exposition of chapter one of 1 Thessalonians, and are entitled: "Grace and Peace," "Three Things to Remember," "The Dynamite of God,"**

and "Examples and Models." The next four talks, prepared for a convocation of college and high school young people, some of the latter identified with the "Jesus Folk," are: "The Real Revolutionary," "Moving Into the Twentieth Century," "The Fellowship of the Unashamed," and "Walled in or Walled Out." Additional talks included are: "Space Age Religion," "The Vitality of Christianity," "The Scarlet Line," "Is There Power in the Blood?" and "The Greatest Counterfeiter." Published by Mission Messenger, the book contains 224 pages.

The Divine Purpose **(Bound volume of** *Mission Messenger* **for 1972)**

The Question Box **(Bound volume of** *Mission Messenger* **for 1973)**

Heaven Help Us **(Print edition, 1974; Kindle edition, 2010): The purpose of this book is to stimulate thought and promote a deeper study of the revealed will of God as it relates to the person and work of the Holy Spirit in his relationship to the believer, to the Word, and to God. Since the author believes that God has spoken, and the revelation of what He has said is contained in the Bible, he maintains that experiences must be judged in the light of the Scripture, and not the reverse. Consequently, it is to Scripture that he turns to answer such questions as: Is the Holy Spirit a who or what? What are the implications of the Holy Spirit as Comforter? What is the sin against the Holy Spirit? How should the Spirit's presence affect daily living? Ketcherside wrote: "If this volume leads you into a life of sharing with the Father and all the other members of His family— our brothers and sisters; if it brings freedom from fear of the present; and if it strengthens your faith, it will have achieved its goal and God will be praised." Originally published and copyrighted by The Standard Publishing Company, publication rights were subsequently assigned to the Ketcherside family. Contains 176 pages.**

Pure Speech **(Bound volume of** *Mission Messenger* **for 1974)**

One in Christ **(Bound volume of** *Mission Messenger* **for 1975) (2011, Kindle Edition)**

The Death of the Custodian **(1976; 2010, Kindle Edition): Is the New Testament a code of laws which the professing Christian must follow? If not, what about the commandments of Jesus? What is the nature of the "new covenant"? How does the "new covenant" compare with the "old covenant"? In answering these and other questions, the author expounds upon the teaching of scripture regarding law and grace. This volume offers thought-provoking reading and serves as a study guide for every Christian. Originally published and copyrighted by The Standard Publishing Company which later relinquished publishing rights to the author's family, the book is 152 pages in length. Over the years, numerous editions have followed from several publishers under different titles.**

The Twisted Scriptures **(First edition, 1977; Diversity Press edition, 1992; Kindle edition, 2009): Introduced by the author as "a revised edition of my former volume under that name," he described it as dealing with "the tragic misuse of the sacred scriptures to justify our carnal strife and division." Referring to the book as "An exposure of the sectarian spirit that abuses the Bible in defense of divisions among Christians," Leroy Garrett regarded it as "One of [Carl's] most liberating books"— "as excellent as anything he ever wrote." The book examines each of the passages of scripture that have been used over the years to justify division within the Stone-Campbell restoration brotherhood over matters of doctrine. Shows how none of those passages has been interpreted correctly when used to divide brothers from one another. Concludes that scripture provides only three grounds for the dissociation of a congregation from one previously accepted as one of the redeemed: (1) denial of gospel facts, (2) moral turpitude, and (3) the factional spirit. The book contains eleven chapters titled: "The Twisted Scriptures,"**

"Except They Be Agreed," "Another Gospel," "Gospel and Doctrine," "Conformity or Diversity," "Contrary to the Doctrine," "Withdraw Yourselves," "Walking in the Light," "Receive Him Not," "The One Faith," "The Great Problem." The original publication by Mission Messenger contained 194 pages.

Talks to Jews and Non-Jews **(1977; 2011, Kindle Edition): Shares his thoughts on several questions including: Are there three Gods? Did the prophets indicate that the Messiah to come was to be a person? Cannot the principles of Judaism accomplish the unifying of mankind? How can Jesus Christ be the 'Prince of Peace' in a world of strife and war? The discussion of these questions by the author with his Jewish audiences is fascinating reading for Jews and non-Jews alike. It offers an opportunity to gain a deeper appreciation of Jesus, as well as a better understanding of the Scriptures. The author also scrutinizes the Epistle to the Hebrews in which he enumerates the several ways in which the new state under Christ supersedes the old state under the law. Originally published and copyrighted by The Standard Publishing Company which subsequently relinquished publishing rights to the author's family. This is one of only three books written by Ketcherside that were not published by Mission Messenger during his lifetime. The other two were:** *Heaven Help Us* **and** *The Death of the Custodian***. His autobiography,** *Pilgrimage of Joy***, was published posthumously by College Press.**

Adventure of Faith **(1978; 2011, Kindle Edition): Seeks to challenge faith that is not transformational, specifically faith that has been bottled up in traditional forms of Christianity in which the deep wells of** *koinonia* **and** *diakonia***, which the Spirit dug for our sustenance, have been filled up, leaving us to drink from shallow surface-water contaminated by theological waste which has been drained into it. The author suggests that one of the great adventures of our age could be the digging anew of these wells. He presents compelling evidence from Scripture that**

mediocrity is not to be the lot of any of God's children, since they have all been called and empowered to be God-containers, imitators of God, travelers on the road to high adventure. Contains 199 pages, published by Mission Messenger.

Colony of Heaven **(1979; 2010, Kindle Edition): This work, published by the author four years after he ceased publication of his monthly journal,** *Mission Messenger***, is a running commentary in which Paul's letter to the Philippians is examined in the three-fold context of geography, history, and revelation. It is a treatment of spiritual and social values drawn from Philippians— described by Paul as "a colony of heaven"— in which the author puts the entire letter in the context of our own age and problems. 153 pages, published by Mission Messenger.**

In the Beginning **(1980; 2011, Kindle Edition): This is the last book the author ever published (his autobiography was published posthumously). Its title has reference to the beginning of a new approach to unity which was first proposed by the founders of what later came to be known as the Stone-Campbell restoration movement (thought to be the largest religious movement indigenous to North America). It includes essays and speeches dating from around the year 1957, the year that marks a new "beginning" in the direction of the author's own mission and message. It contains the most comprehensive statement to be found of his views on Christian fellowship (chapters 13-21). It was in the nature of Christian fellowship that he perceived Christian unity to be grounded, and that a unity, by nature, tolerates a diversity of doctrinal deductions--due to the nature of Christian fellowship. With reference to his earliest essays of this period Ketcherside wrote in his autobiography: "They represented my crossing of the Rubicon, the burning of my bridges behind me. They were the first guns fired in my commitment to an unrelenting war against sectarianism, and especially against my own." Published by Mission Messenger, the book contains 216 pages.**

Pilgrimage of Joy **(1991; 2010, Kindle Edition): The last of Ketcherside's books, his autobiography, was published in installments by** *Restoration Review*, **from January 1976 through December of 1981. It was later published posthumously in a single volume as** *Pilgrimage of Joy* **by College Press in 1991 and by SCM e-prints in 2010 in Kindle format. In this volume, the author tells the story of his own transformation from an advocate of unity in conformity to one of unity in diversity. He was an ecumenist, but he was convinced that unity would never become a kind of organizational get-together. In the final analysis it is personal, he would say. This book reflects the changes in his thinking over the years, from accepting others upon the basis of their conformity to his thinking to accepting others upon the same basis upon which God had accepted him—with all his ignorance and imperfection. In 1947, and again in 1951, he was invited to spend several months teaching in the British Isles. He later spoke at conferences in Brazil, Mexico, and Puerto Rico. While he held no academic degrees, the author spent much of his time on college and university campuses across the country, confronting the philosophical forces that ally themselves against the sovereignty of God. In his later years, his attention was focused on serving the needs of those who had been marginalized in the inner city of his own St. Louis. His autobiography covers the period of his life from birth (1908) through the year he ceased publishing his monthly journal,** *Mission Messenger* **(1975).**

Books Published by Mission Messenger

History of the Church Through the Ages, **by Robert Brumback (1957)**

Where Jesus Walked, **by Robert Brumback (1959)**

Voices of Concern, **edited by Robert Meyers (1966)**

The Holy Spirit in Our Lives Today, **edited by W. Carl**

Ketcherside (1967)

Thoughts on Unity, **Edited by Stanley Paregien (1971)**

Thomas Campbell and Barton W. Stone, *Declaration and Address* | *Last Will and Testament* **(1972, 1975)**

Availability of Works by W. Carl Ketcherside

With the exception of the works by Brumback, which are under copyright, all essays and books appearing in the above bibliography are available in the "Ketcherside Collection" of archive.org, from where they may be freely downloaded in a variety of formats.

CARL AND NELL KETCHERSIDE'S VISIT TO CHURCHES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

February 26 – March 24, 1947

Appendix

Nell Ketcherside's diary beginning with arrival in London February 26
Transcribed by Sue (Ketcherside) Burton.

Wednesday, February 26, 1947: Breakfast was called for 6 A.M. but we were late for first sitting— melon, bacon, eggs, coffee. Down for our luggage and the wait for disembarking at Southhampton. Such an uproar with the deck full of people and about 9:30 we were allowed to go down the gangplank. The first thing was to find the "K" listed outside where our heavy baggage was to be found. As we identified each piece it was placed on the table for custom inspection. Ours was not opened but both cameras were inspected— OK. A porter took our baggage to the train. First impression on English soil: small trains, engine, coaches sitting on high wheels, etc. We had a compartment of 4 double seats, 2 on each side of the aisle facing each other with a table between each 2. Our companions were a couple from Canada going to England. Mario (a fellow ship passenger -skb) sat with us, too. We made good time on our little train, arriving in Waterloo Station London on time (12:00 noon).

As our train moved through Southhamptom we noticed the

bombed buildings, the bobbies, cars on the wrong side of the street, the many chimneyed buildings, the chalk cliffs, snow. Every home along the way had a hot-house attached to it. They raise their own tomatoes. At the station the first thing was to assemble our baggage. We had our baggage "registered" in the station, then made the rounds of the waiting rooms looking for some of the brethren. The night before we had no way of letting them know we wouldn't be at the station, except it would be announced over the loudspeaker system. Later we learned that 3 of the brethren had met the train and, even after learning that only part of the passengers were coming in, waited for the second train. They carried a *Macedonian Call, A Scripture Standard* **and another booklet so we would recognize them.**

We didn't find anyone so went into the station restaurant and ordered pork and peas, mashed potatoes, extra spinach and roast potatoes, coffee. The aftereffects of the war were present: the girls' green flannel uniforms were very old, faded and spotted; the table linen and rugs were old and worn; clothing and shoes were very worn, although the shoes were well-polished.

After lunch we found a porter to take our baggage to a taxi. We "queued up" for a taxi, picked up the baggage and were off for Brother Scott's. Noted left lane driving, Big Ben tower, the Thames, interesting streets to 96 Chetwynd Road. Brother Scott carne to the door, took us to the side entrance and into the dining room. A small coal stove fits into the fireplace, room on top to have perhaps 3 pots for cooking, above and inside the fireplace a place to dry clothes. Also lines across the room at the fireplace. The "scullery" and outhouse. Upstairs the toilet "bowl", bedrooms and lavatory. A third floor. "Garden" in the back surrounded by an 8-foot wall. For dinner a salad bowl, tea, cakes, cheese.

We went with Brother Scott to Bible Study at the church in Kentish Town London. The building was erected in 1871. The

walls had been cracked by bombing raids. Too cold to meet in the main auditorium so we assembled in the back room where there was a gas heater. There were 12 or 13 present. Brother and Sister Hirst (Wales), Brother Black and Esther, Eric McDonald, Brother and Sister Matthews, Arthur von Loesch (a former pro-Nazi), we 3. Brother Black was leader— gave the number of the song, we all stood and sang, then prayer by Brother Scott, then a brother read I Corinthians 1. Brother Black expounded on it, giving their position along some lines. Carl was then asked to speak regarding our position, which he did, especially about the pastor system. General discussion. Dismissal by Eric McDonald.

At about 4:30 Brother Channing and Brother Scott took us to the Ration Board for our cards. We were given a traveler's book, coupons for a month, then renewal. We rode the buses. We had seen people hopping onto buses while they were moving but we queued for one at a regular stop. Other stops are marked "by request." Fare: 1 ½ pence (3 hapny). You board the bus and the conductor comes through and collects fares.

Thursday, February 27, 1947: We had to get up early. Brother Scott brought us in a "jug" of hot and one of cold water for our bowl and lit the gas. We had breakfast of prunes, omelet (made with dried eggs) and tea. Brother Scott called a taxi and we went to King's Cross Station and boarded a train for Edinburgh (L.N.E.R. - London Northeastern Railway), about 450 miles. The platforms at the stations are built so that you step into the train from the platform. The coaches have a hallway running the entire length on one side with compartments on the other. The one we were in would seat 6 people but we had it to ourselves. There was no diner so Sister Scott wrapped us a lunch of sandwiches, meat pie, cake, muffins, cheese stick and black currant juice. Delicious. We are to go to Waverly Station where Albert Winstanley will meet us.

(NOTES: Fogs in London not so heavy as in the past. Sister Scott one time had her baby out in the "pram- and the fog was

so heavy she couldn't see the baby. The buses usually stop running in the fog but some would creep along and the conductor walk alongside the bus to guide and help people in. People have lost themselves for miles in the fog. Train coach = carriage, baggage coach = luggage van, conductor = collector, engineer = driver, brakeman = guard/inspector, suspenders = braces, garters = supporters, hospitable = homely)

At Darlington 3 soldiers sat in our compartment. Two were taking a 7-week leave from Durham. They ate the rest of our sandwiches and cakes, hadn't eaten since breakfast. They have had no heat whatsoever in their barracks because of the coal shortage. Even their towels froze. These boys were in the Durham Infantry. One was with Montgomery in the African-Sicily-Italy campaigns; was shot in the elbow by a German.

We arrived in Edinburgh at 7:15 P.M, an hour late because of the heavy snow. We were met by Albert Winstanley and Brother Will Allen in his taxi -- he has a taxi/bus service. They took us to Brother and Sister Pryde's home in Arniston, Gorebridge. John Pryde works at the coal mine ("colliery"). This couple had lived in the U.S. nine years (1905-1914, W. Virginia and Marion, Illinois) and were happy to see someone from the States. Their home is furnished by the colliery rent-free. Lovely home. Bay window in dining room looking out onto the Pentland Hills 12 miles away. Arniston is named for a wealthy family who had an estate here, the estate is now a hospital.

Friday., February 28, 1947: We went to young Will Allen's for tea at 4:00. Carl had a business meeting with the elders at Newtongrange. I went with David to Sunshine Corner. About 40 children were present. They sang choruses such as "Zaccheus," "Deep and Wide," "Two Shall be Together," "J-0-Y," "Sunshine Comer," "Read Your Bible" (sung to the tune of "Count Your Blessings"), "Give Me Oil in My Lamp." Albert read part of a chapter then re-read it, leaving out words, with the children

following along and filling in the words. There was a recitation by a boy, and a girl recited the first Psalm. We walked back to the Prydes for supper, about 2 miles.

Saturday, March 1. 1947: At 2:00 P.M. we met at the meeting house and Will Allen took a busload to Motherwell for the Conference Business Meeting. Brother Haldane (Newtongrange) presided. Dave Dougall, secretary. Dave gave report of last meeting and business to be taken care of. One brother had checked into buying a car and loudspeaker system to be used in evangelistic and open-air meetings. Cost of new car tax-free: 650# ($2600), loudspeaker system 180# ($720). Question brought up concerning Hindley sending out young men to preach and other churches paying their share in keeping them busy. (Custom of agreeing: Clapping hands, stomping feet)

Carl gave an outline of the work in the States stressing our opposition to one-man pastor system. Gave an idea of the annual Bible Readings. Tea was served: meat pies, sandwiches, scones, buns, tarts, cakes, tea.

We stayed in the home of Willie Wardrop Saturday night. Grandpa James, Willie, Jean, Jim and William.

Sunday, March 2, 1947: Sunday A.M. Motherwell church. Carl spoke. Wardrops' for dinner. To Brother John Snedden's for tea— daughter Megs, Amy Davidson (Hugh), Amy Cummings, Brothers Wardrop, Anderson, Hunter, Davidson, John Todd. To meeting at night, then home by bus to Glasgow with Brother John Anderson (3 daughters, 1 son).

(NOTES on Sunday services: One elder (president, Brother Wardrop that day) and one deacon seated at the table on the platform. Elder rises, announces first song, reads part of it, announces it again, the congregation rises and sings. Remain standing for prayer, then seated. Elder announces reading of a Psalm, read by another brother; elder announces reading of the

New Testament lesson, read by another brother. Then prayers are offered, men standing, women remain seated. President gives a talk on the communion after which the deacon passes the bread (wholewheat cut into 2 small pieces), then the fruit of the vine, served in a silver goblet. The collection is received in a felt-lined box (Note: she drew a picture of it.—skb). The president announces the speaker— Carl spoke. President announces final song after a few words of appreciation. Stand to sing. President gives benediction— "The love of the Father, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the communion of the Holy Spirit rest and abide with us. Amen" All sit down again and remain quiet a few minutes. At many places when people come in, as soon as they are seated the women offer a silent prayer. Men stand at the seat they are to occupy. Even if the service has started, this is done.

Evening services at Motherwell: Brother John Anderson presided, singing and prayer, gospel meeting speaker Carl.)

The Andersons' home is about 80 years old. Large kitchen, dining and sitting rooms. 1 bedroom down, 3 bedrooms and bath up. Iron railing on stairs, stuffed alligator in reception hall, imitation leather tooled design on wall along stairway and chair-rail in sitting room. Lovely tile modernized fireplaces. Bathtub has black vitrolite at back and all around, lavatory above. All homes have bay windows. Very fine old furniture in this home and many others we visited.

Monday, March 3, 1947: Jennie Anderson teaches school. During the war she was evacuated with her school, placed in a mansion, but in a poorly equipped attic with 5 children. Not there long, but later evacuated again.

Carl and I rode a double decker tram into the city of Glasgow. We wanted to see Argyle St., the old shopping street in Glasgow. Stores very dimly lighted, no heat. In the Woolworth store the clerks wore coats and one girl had gloves on. Very little

merchandise. Lewis's is one of the largest department stores. These stores are scattered throughout Great Britain. Good food in the restaurants and much cheaper than our restaurants. Dinner consists of: 1. Soup, 2. Meat, potatoes, another vegetable (turnips, parsnips, peas, leeks, broccoli, spinach), 3. Sweet course, usually pudding with sauce, 4. Tea.

(NOTES on food service and other things in homes. 1. Soup, 2. Meat serving is placed on each person's plate, a bowl of potatoes and another vegetable— peas, turnips, leeks or mixed vegetables (no points), 3. Pudding with custard sauce, sometimes Jello too, fruit with sauce, 4. Cakes, crumpets (pancakes), biscuits, buns, scones, bread, 5. Tea. When tea is served at 4:00 or 5:00 it often has #4 served. High tea will have Spam or cheese or both added. Many breadstuffs. In Scotland bread is sliced and put on the table, butter is softened at the fireplace. In England bread is always sliced and buttered before being set on the table. Supper at 9:00— cheese, cakes, tea or fish, chips, cakes, tea.

Very few homes have shades. Many bay windows— curtains open and at night draperies pulled together over them. Bedrooms often have draperies only which are closed at night. Beds: 2 sheets, 2 or 3 woolen blankets, spread, eider down comforter on top, usually bolster then pair of pillows. Hot water bottles or "pigs.")

Glasgow was very smoky and foggy while we were there. It is a commercial city, ship building, on the Clyde River.

Monday night we attended services at the Hospital Street Glasgow congregation. Tea served especially for those who carne directly from work. Meat pies, cakes and tea.

Tuesday, March 4, 1947: We breakfast at 9:00 A.M. then Tina and I went to the market. My points bought butter, margarine, fat, jam, sugar and 2 eggs.

Albert, John and May McCallum, a brother from Blackridge and his wife carne to take us to Pennyvenie, a coal mining town. Beautiful countryside, much like our own except stone fences. Sheep have heavier wool on their backs, different breeds than we have. At Ayr we took moving pictures of Robert Burns statue and then of his home. For a six pence each we could go through the home and museum. Thatch roof cottage, stone floors. We entered by the stable door, passed by feeding stalls, then into the main living room where there was a large deep fireplace with old kettles on swinging racks. A bed was built into the wall.

On down to Dalmellington to the home of Brother and Sister Jess (and Jennifer) for tea. The Jesses live in a prefabricated house with 4 rooms and a bath, concrete floors. The 9-member congregation meets in the schoolhouse at Pennyvenie. Brother and Sister Black, another Sister Black, Dave Chalmers, Brother McGinn and we were present (12 in all). Carl gave an analytical lesson on Colossians 3:7. After services we went back to the Jesses for tea, then drove back to Glasgow (about 45 miles). The Andersons had tea prepared for us. Albert, John, May carne in for a cup. It was around 12:30 when we went to bed.

Wednesday, March 5, 1947: Slamannan. A beautiful day. John and May McCallum and Albert carne for us at 4:00 and took us to Brother John Wilson's for tea. Grandpa, Brother and Sister Wilson, Jean (15) and Mary (17). Church services at 7:00. Song and prayer, tea, solo, talk, solo by Albert, duet by Cari and me, then question period. Back to the Andersons' home.

(Send canned yams to the Andersons)

Thursday, March 6, 1947: Blackridge. Albert carne at 12:45 to take us to Blackridge. We went to dinner to John and May McCallum's, had fish and chips. John's father and mother carne. His sister Jean and her husband carne in before church

time. Had a good meeting with questions by several brethren and sisters. We spent the night and Joe and Agnes Kerr's (Roger and Johan). Theirs is a prefabricated house with 5 rooms and bath. Agnes has the nicest Scottish dialect we have heard. She is a lover of Robert Burns' works, especially "Tam o' Shanter."

(Canned yams to Joe Kerr)

Friday, March 7, 1947: Albert came to take us to Edinburgh by bus. Joe Kerr went, too. Walked along Princes Street, the main street in the city, to Waverly Station (saw a soldier in kilts) to "register our luggage" (instead of "checking our baggage") and buy our tickets at the "booking office" to "book a passage" for Kirkcaldy, Fife. We then walked along Princes Street, viewed the beautiful statue of Sir Walter Scott, up to the museum (closed), and to Edinburgh Castle (closed). Watched the guard, and looked at the beautiful view of the city from the castle. On the south side one can look down on several streets to the lowest one, perhaps 75 feet below. From the castle the Royal Mile leads to Holyrood Castle where the King and Queen reside when in Edinburgh. Along this street is St. Giles Church of Scotland, the High Courts, John Knox house (founder of the Church of Scotland {Presbyterian}). Edinburgh is a beautiful clean city "for the wealthy people."

The train we took to Kirkcaldy was one where we stepped directly into our compartment. Albert, Carl and I occupied a compartment that would seat 8 people. The glass in the door slides down. We wouldn't have known where to get off if it weren't for Albert. Later we learned to look at the chart in the station and count the stops to where we were to get off. Also to note the name of the last stop before our own. We crossed the Firth of Forth Bridge, beautiful structure, one mile long, takes painters a year to get it painted. At the depot we were met by Brother Mellis, Stanley, and Brother Robert Roberts.

Saturday, March 8, 1947: Rose Street, Kirkcaldy,

congregational social meeting. Tea at 4:00, meeting at 5:00. Brother Roberts gave a short history of the Rose Street meeting house. Alexander Campbell spoke here in 1847. The building was erected about 1807.

Program: Rose Street Choir led by Sarah Glass (18 or 20 voices) - "Steal Away"

Slamannan duet - Mary and Jean Wilson
Wallacestone solo - David Dougall
Rose Street solo - Brother Monigan
Buckhayen recitation - Mrs. Green
Newtongrange solo - Brother Morris
Talk by Carl
Rose Street quartet - Mrs. Mayes, Ina Mayes, Annie Dewar, Jean Dryburgh - "Abide With Me"
Song - audience
Rose Street solo - McNeil
Wallacestone solo - David Dougall
Duet - Carl and Nell
Hospital Street Glasgow solo - Sister May
Talk by Albert
Rose Street duet - Sarah Glass and Mrs. Studman (Steedman?)

Sunday, March 9, 1947: Rose Street, Kirkcaldy. 11:30 A.M. Carl, Brothers Mellis and McDonald and another brother on the platform— 2 small gates on either side. Same procedure as Motherwell except two pass the emblems, two goblets. Contribution taken in a green velvet bag (Note: she drew a picture of it.—skb) before communion. A second collection was taken for their building fund. Brother Mellis set the communion service away after it was used, then prepared the Bible stand. Carl spoke, announcements, dismissal. The presiding elder always gives the benediction. (The three men were dressed in morning suits— black string tie, wing collar, black coat, black and gray striped trousers.)

The teachers and a few others stayed for Sunday School from 2:00 to 3:00. 50 or 60 children. Several songs were led by a sister before the time to start. Brother Mellis led the meeting. A boy about 9 years old read Luke 5:1-11 and did a wonderful job. Brother Mellis led in prayer, Carl spoke about

American children, schools, Vacation Bible Studies, and "Love Lifted Me." John 3:16. Two of the songs they sang were "Jesus Bids Us Shine" and "I'm Inside, Outside, Upside, Downside Happy as Can Be." One young boy wore kilts, beautifully pleated.

Home for tea of meat pie, chips and cakes. Then back for evening service at 6:00. Brother Mellis, Carl and I had gone early to see Sister Spears who is ill in bed. She is past 82. You enter her home through a high gate and high stone wall. She has beautiful old furnishings. Evidently quite wealthy. She had donated red velvet cushions for the pews in the church. Her father had met Alexander Campbell in the church at Rose Street.

This church is the oldest in Scotland. The building is about 140 years old. Rose Street is a side street off High Street originally called "Long Toon" (Long Town) because the one long street was all it contained. All other streets are merely side streets. Rose Street is about one block long and ends at the sea wall. As we near the church we can hear the water lapping against the wall. Kirkcaldy is built on the Firth of Forth and is famous for its Nairn linoleums and ropes of all kinds.

The Mellis family consists of Brother and Sister Mellis, Louise and Stanley. Jack Hill is Louise's boyfriend. Brother Mellis is Wagon Inspector (Freight Car Inspector) on the L.N.E.R. lines. An old shepherd attends Rose Street— they call him "Skipper."

Monday, March 10, 1947: We intended to take pictures of

Kirkcaldy this A.M. but a cold wind was blowing snow and rain so we stayed in. I wrote the family and Carl wrote a piece to Ken Morgan. After lunch we went to Brother and Sister John and Agnes Witherspoon's home in Balbeggie Kirkcaldy. Their home was formerly an air shaft to a coal mine. He closed the air shaft, concreted the floor then put four rooms and a bath in. The walls are about 3 feet thick. They had a beautiful wardrobe, clock, two heavy mahogany chairs that had come from a ship. We had tea of scones, pancakes, oven scones, etc., bramble jelly (blackberry).

David and Elizabeth Mellis had gone with us. We four carne back to a women's meeting at Rose Street. Sister Robert Roberts presided. Song, prayer, I gave a talk about our Ladies' Meetings, then Carl spoke and we had a question period. They meet for one hour each Monday night, have tea, read books or have a speaker and knit. Beautiful knitting sets.

Tuesday, March 11, 1947: About 1:00 Carl and I took a bus to Leven, transferred to the Anstruther bus and got off at Pittenweem, a fishing village. We had followed the Forth seaside seeing castle ruins and going through several villages. The roads are very narrow, there are many sharp turns in the streets and steep hills. The doors of the houses open directly on to the streets. One could wash the upstairs windows of the houses from the upper deck of the bus.

Neil Paterson met us and took us home to tea with Betsy and Joyce. Jimmie Hughes was there, too. Neil, Jimmie, Carl and I walked through the village, first to the seawall. From there 3 islands (rock) were visible— Inch Cape Rock, Bass Rock and another. Fishing boats were all in harbor with men cleaning their nets. Too cold to catch fish. Nets were hanging from house windows to dry. The town is built on a hillside with the businesses on the top and residences down at the sea. They have walled-in yards and walled-in steps going down to the homes called "wynd." There is Waterwynd, Covewynd, Schoolwynd,

etc. The church meets in the Town Hall and just below this is the entrance to an ancient cave. The Church of Scotland has made a commercial project of this and has connected its building to the cave entrance by stairs. We walked down the brae visiting several members of the church. Sister Strachan and her father Mr. Hughes, Maggie Watson and her daughter Janette, Sister Nellie ?, Sister Adams. Then back to Neil's for tea again. Shortbread, varieties of other cakes, rhubarb tarts.

Wednesday, March 12, 1947: Brother Robert Roberts came to take us on a bus tour of the city of Kirkcaldy. Walked past the bus depot and around the old part of the city and up to the oldest school in Kirkcaldy. Also an old church with a private cemetery which had only 3 or 4 tombstones in it. Back to the Mellises for lunch and then to the Robertses for tea. Brother Odd and Sister Hughes, Alec Roberts were there, too.

6:00 to 7:00 Sunshine Comer. Songs: "Sunshine Comer," "I'm Inright ," "Ask, Ask, Ask," "Be Like Jesus," "Zaccheus," "My Cup's Running Over." The children demonstrated their "Sunshine Orders." Carl spoke, Mrs. Hughes led final prayer.

7:00 Regular midweek meeting. Question period - elder adopting children, taking communion to the sick (should members partake if they partook in A.M.), developing and using younger men in the assemblies, women taking part in the assemblies, open communion, fellowship, open baptism, etc.

Snowing when we went home. Walter Hoggan (policeman) came in and stayed until after midnight.

Thursday, March 13, 1947: Blizzard still on, drifting snow. Brother Mellis took the day off and took us to Edinburgh on the train. Beautiful beaches along the Firth of Forth, summer holiday businesses all along the coast, went through two long tunnels, saw Inverkeithing which is a great shipbuilding city. A second engine was used to push our train up the grade to the

Firth of Forth Bridge. Two aircraft carriers were signaling to each other. The weather was so bad the ferry steamer looked as if it would topple over. Arrived in Edinburgh at 11:50 A.M. Albert Winstanley met us at Waverly Station. Went to Mackies for lunch— pea soup, Russian steak, potatoes, turnips, steamed pudding with custard sauce. Walked to see the American-Scots World War I memorial.

Walked up to the castle in the snowstorm. Through the entrance, up and around to St. Margaret's Chapel (built in 1031), saw an old well, cannon, clock, night lighting system. Then to the highest point where the Memorial Building stands. This is a memorial to every unit that fought in Scotland in World War I. Each unit has a plaque with a desk in front and a book containing the names of those who lost their lives. David Mellis found the names of men who had served with him in the Seaforth Division. The four front windows are stained glass depicting the four seasons. In each a particular incident that took place in that season in the war. The Autumn window has every kind of leaf of native trees falling down, seasonal colors. Winter has pine cones and snow, Summer warm colors. There are carvings on the wall of every animal used in the war— horses, mules, oxen, camels, dogs, mice, canaries. In the center of this building is a small room which has some of the original rock left uncovered to show it to be the highest point of the Castle Rock. A green marble stone from Italy stands here. On top of it is a locked bronze box. Inside is the record of all the names that appear in the books in the outer room. The only time this box is opened is to enter a correction or new material from the books. In the ceiling St. Michael with his foot on a dragon's head is carved of oak, angels surrounding. Windows in this shrine depict Biblical scenes— two from the Old Testament and one from Revelation.

We left for the winding downward trek to the gate of the castle. We walked down the Royal Mile, stopped at the John Knox house. The weather was too bad for more sightseeing.

Picked up our suitcases at the station and caught a bus for Arniston and back to the Prydes'. Carl and Albert attended the Ladies Meeting at Newtongrange where Carl spoke. The men had been invited and there were 40 or 50 present. Snow still blowing and drifting. Carl walked home, about two miles. Aunt Mary Pryde gave us her gas mask and its carry bag, a pictorial calendar of Scotland and a shopping bag for Mom.

Friday, March 14, 1947: Sun came out and the snow was beautifully shining. After lunch I went to see Dr. Smith for a corn I had developed in the walks in Edinburgh (VERY sore). Carl and Albert went to the school and visited each room with Mr. Lamb, the headmaster. I walked up to Robertsons' and then to "young" Will Allen's where Albert, Carl and I had tea.

Sunshine Comer from 7:00 to 8:00 The children recited their memory phrases A to I. They learn a new one each week and say all of them when they meet. (Ex. "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee" is the one for tonight, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever" will be for next week). The children sang choruses, gave readings— a small girl recited the lst Psalm, a boy recited the books of the New Testament, etc. A girl sang "The Bells of St. Mary's" and another girl sang "Bell Bottom Trousers." Albert read Matthew 17:1-8 making errors in the reading and the children corrected the errors.

(For discipline in the schools I learned a strap is used in Scotland and a cane in England.)

Saturday, March 15, 1947: Snow, sunshine, rain, etc. Left Prydes to go to Grandpa (George) Allen's for lunch. Janette Reid is his housekeeper. Had beef, potatoes, peas, pudding consisting of heavy custard, lemon Jello and apricots. Cookies, chocolates, tea.

From 3;00 to 5:00 Carl taught an analytical study in I Thessalonians. Over to The Hut for tea— salmon sandwiches,

cakes, tea. Gospel meeting at night in the church building. Afterwards we went to George Robinson's for supper— fish, chips, cakes, tea. Albert stays with them. They have 3 children including a baby 9 months old. Left at 10:30. Snowed while we were there so a very cold walk home.

Sunday, March 16, 1947: Church services in Newtongrange. Bible classes are from 11:00 to 12:00, general meeting from 12:00 to about 1:30. After the Old and New Testament readings is a time for the prayers of the church. Whoever is going to lead in prayer rises, all men rise but women remain seated. Grandpa (George) Allen presided and told the story of a young man who had been baptized the past Wednesday evening. Will Allen was asked to come forward and give the young man the right hand of fellowship for the church.

We ate dinner at Will Allen's whose wife had stayed home to prepare it. Soup, meat pie, potatoes, peas, beet root, Scotch dumpling with custard sauce, ice cream, tea and biscuits. Back to the meeting house for analytical study from 3:00 to 5:00, to The Hut for tea, gospel meeting 6:00 to 7:00. Aunt Mary Pryde had a supper of cold sliced tongue, pork & beans, plums, sultana cake and tea.

In the afternoon rain began to fall, turning to snow. The streets were slushy with snow and rain. We were in bed by 10:30 — the earliest since we've been here.

Monday, March 17, 1947: This is a beautiful morning overhead but terrible underfoot. Will Allen is coming to pick us up for lunch at his place. Meat pie, mashed potatoes, navy beans, pudding with orange Jello and milk, biscuits, shortbread, sultana cake, etc., and tea. Brother George Allen carne and got us in his "Woolsey?" car and took us to the school. The headmaster took us to each room. As he entered he said, "Good afternoon, children." All arose and spoke. Boys salute. The 5-year-olds were having a writing class and were finishing the

word "big." The teacher makes it on the blackboard with the children watching. "Now we start with a big window, go clockwise." Children follow. "Now we draw a straight line. Stay within the line and make another window. Then when we get to the end of a sentence what do we do?" Children: "Make a stop sign (period)." Teacher: "Put this work away and get out your slates to add and subtract." The 8- and 9-year-olds were in gym. A 10- to 11-year-old group was writing past tense from a present tense English story. Carl showed them American money and told them about American schools. Questions: 1. Do the children get free milk? 2. Do they wear uniforms? 3. Politics, 4. Games, 5. Telephones.

We had to rush to church for Bible study from 4:00 to 6:00. Tea at Morris's with several others. Meeting from 7:00 to 8:00. Home for cold sliced mutton, sponge cake, scones and tea.

Tonight the wind is blowing. Hope for better weather. Birmingham area had a gale yesterday that did a lots of damage. Rivers are flooding because of melting snow.

Tuesday, March 18, 1947: It was 4 weeks ago that we left St. Louis.

This morning dawned threatening a bad one and proved just that all morning with a cold wind blowing the snow across the landscape in front of the house so that we couldn't see the hills at all. I still have a bad cold so stayed home. I wrote letters, etc. We had dinner of tomato soup, steak, gravy, mashed potatoes, mixed vegetables, pudding and raspberries, tea.

Carl left at 12:45 to meet Albert in Newtongrange where they took a bus to Bathgate. They had tea with Brother Banks, his wife, daughter Nan and granddaughter Moira. Nan's husband is in the Royal Navy in the Far East. After the 7:00 to 8:00 services they had tea at Brother Fleming's.

Wednesday, March 19, 1947: Fog, fog everywhere and

almost heavy enough to cut a slice to eat. Trees and telephone lines on the other side of the street not visible. I went to bed on the davanette in front of the fireplace and stayed down all day. For lunch we had steak, mashed potatoes, mixed vegetables, pudding with applesauce baked under it and custard sauce over it.

Carl left at 12:45 to meet Albert to go to Wallacestone for services. They went to Dave Dougall's for tea. Uncle John, Aunt Mary and I had tea about 5:00.

Thursday, March 20, 1947: Fog again this morning, but thankful that most of the snow has melted.

Aunt Mary didn't want me to do the washing so she did it and I hung the clothes to dry. We had lunch of Spam, chips, leeks, Swedish turnips, custard sauce and berries. Carl left at 12:45 to meet Albert to go to Tranent. Albert returned to Newtongrange for a ladies meeting and social. They presented him with a farewell gift. I ironed all of the clothes and went to bed about 10:00. Carl went to Brother Wilson's for tea and to stay the night. Visited Brother Joe Ginney (—skb).

Friday, March 21, 1947: I didn't sleep very well. Got up at 8:00 with my throat a little sore. The weather was very gloomy looking and before the breakfast dishes were done showers were falling. They continued off and on all morning. Just before noon Albert came, bringing letters from Mom, Jerry and Sharon. Welcome news from home. Albert stayed for lunch of ground beef, leeks, mashed potatoes, plums and custard sauce, sultana cake, cookies and tea. He wrapped the package with the gas mask, hymn book, stamps, bracelet, handkerchief and tartan.

This afternoon about 5:00 the sun came out and shone all evening. We left the curtains open until about 8:00 to enjoy the bright day.

Carl went into Edinburgh from Tranent and shopped

around, then back to Tranent to the Wilsons for tea. That evening they had the largest number of outsiders at the meeting than they have ever had. Carl came back home tonight.

Saturday, March 22, 1947: This morning was rather cloudy but the skies cleared up until the sun was shining, even very bright in the afternoon. Uncle John just works until noon on Saturday so we all had dinner together. Beef, mashed potatoes, pork & beans, leeks, an excellent pudding of cake dough over pears and apricots with custard sauce. Carl and Uncle John went to Newtongrange for the Bible study 2:30 - 4:30. Uncle John returned but Carl went on to Tranent for the social.

Aunt Mary and I washed and ironed. She scrubbed the front and back stoops, I washed the living room windows and we cleaned the house. At the social in Tranent Albert and I spoke. There were 242 in attendance. We went home with Will and Dorothy Steele to stay the night.

Sunday, March 23, 1947: This morning was a damp, gloomy, cloudy morning. Uncle John, Aunt Mary and I had breakfast at 9:00. Uncle John went to church but due to a sore throat and coughing all night I stayed in. Aunt Mary ha's had a sore foot all week and her toes is still sore so she stayed in, too. Uncle John carne in at 2 P.M. and we had dinner of beef, gravy, mashed potatoes, apricots with custard sauce, sultana cake and tea. Ise Allen carne in to see "the sick and afflicted." She brought in a tie to send to Jerry and a box of Scotland hankies and a squirrel pin for Sue.

Ise told us there were 265 at the Tranent Social. Carl reported a good crowd at Tranent on Lord's Day. He went home with Brother Walter Wilson for luncheon, spoke to 80 children at 3 P.M., home with Brother Stevenson for tea. Brother Nesbit, a Burns lover, recited "A Cotter's Saturday Night," nearly full house at night. Uncle Will Allen took me back to Newtongrange.

John and May McCallum, his father and mother, sister, brother-in-law and little niece; Willie and Dorothy Steele and their four children all carne in from Tranent to tell us good-bye. They stayed a short while, then we had supper of Spam and com pudding (Albert's first com), apricots and Jello, sponge cake, tea and raisin pie with soda (?) topping.

Monday, March 24, 1947: Awoke at 7:00 A.M. to find the ground covered with snow and more falling. Had breakfast of porridge, bacon, eggs, toast and tea. (Remember how Uncle John prepares his porridge for the milk.)

At 9:00 A.M. Will Allen carne in his limousine-taxi to take us to Edinburgh. Farewell to Prydes. We went by to pick up Albert and Brother Holding and on to Edinburgh. Passed the castle from the other side and could see the solid rocky side upon which the castle is built. We arrived at Princes Station and the train left on time at 10:00 A.M. Beautiful hillsides, more castle and sheep than we have seen any time. Farms along the way. Rutabaga fed to sheep. Noted the rock fences going up over the hillsides. Planted fields of cedar trees. Quite a few lambs.

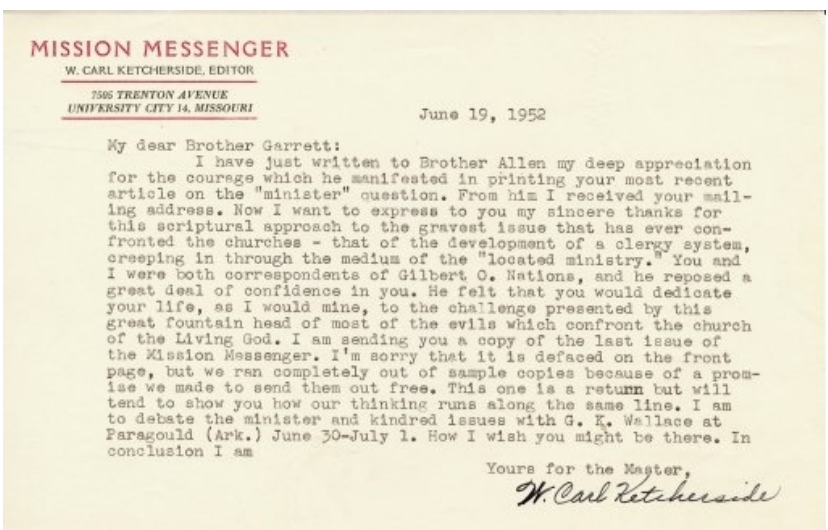
(Arrived in Ulverston, England, about 5:00 to be met by Brother Crosthwaite.

To be continued sometime. —Sue)

LETTER
FROM CARL KETCHERSIDE
TO LEROY GARRETT

June 19, 1952

Appendix



MISSION MESSENGER
W. CARL KETCHERSIDE, EDITOR
7505 TRENTON AVENUE
UNIVERSITY CITY 14, MISSOURI

June 19, 1952

My dear Brother Garrett:

I have just written to Brother Allen my deep appreciation for the courage which he manifested in printing your most recent article on the "minister" question. From him I received your mailing address. Now I want to express to you my sincere thanks for this scriptural approach to the gravest issue that has ever confronted the churches - that of the development of a clergy system, creeping in through the medium of the "located ministry." You and I were both correspondents of Gilbert O. Nations, and he reposed a great deal of confidence in you. He felt that you would dedicate your life, as I would mine, to the challenge presented by this great fountain head of most of the evils which confront the church of the Living God. I am sending you a copy of the last issue of the Mission Messenger. I'm sorry that it is defaced on the front page, but we ran completely out of sample copies because of a promise we made to send them out free. This one is a return but will tend to show you how our thinking runs along the same line. I am to debate the minister and kindred issues with G. K. Wallace at Paragould (Ark.) June 30-July 1. How I wish you might be there. In conclusion I am

Yours for the Master,
W. Carl Ketcherside

Letter from Carl Ketcherside to Leroy Garrett dated June 19, 1952

SOME THOUGHTS ON UNITY

Reuel Lemmons

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Mission Messenger, **September 1963): 131**

Appendix

The Ecumenical spirit is in the air. It stirs the church. And that is good. We notice with real rejoicing the subject being approached in the press and pulpit of every single splinter of the Restoration movement known to us. When brethren begin to think unity then there is the possibility of having it. Many approaches to unity have been attempted in the past, and all of them, possibly, have contributed some good thing. They have possessed their weaknesses, and, because of them, have usually come to naught. We do not believe that any unity attempt will succeed that does not have fundamentally planted in its platform the rooting up and elimination of differences. Unity in spite of differences is not unity.

We may disagree on what fellowship is, but we have no way of disagreeing on when and how we have it. The scriptures make that plain. 1 John 1:7 says, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another . . ." Here is an "IF." "If we walk in the light . . . we have fellowship." Do you know of any other way we can have it? It makes no difference

how much we pat each other on the back, or how often we call on each other to pray, if either one of us is not walking in the light there can be no fellowship. One will say that there are many in all the denominations who are doing the best they know how. So it is among the heathen. This is the modernist's doctrine of "available light." The light the heathen walks in is not enough, and that is why God gave us the responsibility of going to him with the gospel. We can do those in error more good by preaching the gospel to them than we can by extending to them a synthetic fellowship. Fellowship is more than just a nice attitude toward every one.

The only way we can "relieve the scandal of division and alleviate the tragedy of schism" is to correct the error that causes the schism, rather than to whitewash the difference and say that division and schism don't exist except in a Christian Science sort of way. A denial of reality is no approach to healing the schisms.

Paul's approach went something like this: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." This course will produce unity. Ignoring this course is ignoring the Holy Spirit.

Another guide line to unity is found in Phil. 1:27: "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel." Here is a sound basis for unity.

Or, consider Phil. 2:2: "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." Paul did not advise brethren to ignore differences; he advised them to eliminate differences until they were of the same

mind. Any attempt at fellowship that proposes that brethren do not have to speak the same things, believe the same things, have the same mind and judgment, possess one spirit and be of one accord ignores the scriptural basis of unity.

It does nothing to say "brethren will never see alike, think alike or speak the same thing." Such is but an attempt to excuse them for ignoring the plain teaching of the Scriptures. This we cannot do. Brethren may never do as Paul enjoined them to do, but they will continue without the unity for which Jesus prayed in John 17 until they do.

There is no prospect in looking forward to the creation of something that neither existed in the first century nor since— a loose federation of divergent beliefs— which is called unity. If it ever came to be it would be something completely foreign to the New Testament pattern. It has been the restoration plea always that we look not forward to a new creation, evolved by the process of human wistfulness, but rather that we look back to the church of the first century and to the pattern of unity proposed by the Holy Spirit. If brethren cannot be constrained to restore that unity for which Jesus prayed, upon the basis He gave for restoring it, what hope have we that it can be attained on any other basis? Are we wiser than God? The substitution of any plan of unity other than that proposed by Jesus and the writers of the New Testament is a repudiation of the authority of the scriptures as a sole and sufficient rule of faith and practice.

We would be first to concede that among us, who have boasted that we go back to the Bible for everything, there is much government by tradition. One in any sect of the splintered Restoration thinks he has scripture for his practice, when in reality he has only the tradition handed down from his fathers who were in the sect before him. He can find pet scriptures that seem to justify his position, but does not realize that he is going to the Bible with his faith— hunting justification— rather than going to the Bible for his faith. It is a painful thing to find that

we have no monopoly on the truth, nor are we immune from error. But it is the first step toward real unity. Unity is not attained by the maintenance of these private interpretations of scripture, but by the abandonment of them. Concerned ones are not concerned enough when they are content to stay in religious elements foreign to the Scriptures and work from the inside. Division is perpetuated until each can abandon that very position for one of unity. There is no unity in division, nor can there be.

None would discourage attempts seeking unity, but any attempt that offers pardon and heaven to those who have not met the terms of heaven's King is not a scriptural attempt. And any attempt that would convey the idea that there is a fellowship much more broad and vast than that defined by the scriptures has forgotten the Restoration principle entirely. We believe that the plea for unity first made by the pioneers of the Restoration was basically sound. At the old Cane Ridge meeting house, Barton W. Stone and thousands of others were thrilled at the preaching they heard because each preacher cast away the denominational jargon he was used to, and spake only in Bible terms. If Christian unity is ever attained it will come the same way. One cannot forsake the unity of faith and practice that comes from all striving to reproduce the pattern and principles of the New Testament church, and replace them with a highly inferior and absolutely counterfeit proposal for unity in spite of differences. Unity can only come by our putting out of our hearts our own opinions and openheartedly approaching the scriptures to find a common faith. Let us search— each of us— the scriptures, and cast out of our own hearts all that we find to disagree. Let us incorporate immediately that which we find there that we do not now hold. Then, and then alone, will we have unity. It will come naturally. Unity does not come from conferences and councils; it comes when each ceases to bend the plumbline to accommodate his wall, and begins to straighten his wall to fit the plumbline.

PREACHERS OR TEACHERS

David Lipscomb

Gospel Advocate **21 (May 22, 1873): 481–485.**

Appendix

At the meeting in Clarksville the question was asked, "how shall we more fully develops the preaching talent in our midst?" The point of interest was, How shall we induce more of our young members to devote themselves to the teaching of the religion of the Savior? The question elicited considerable interest, and various answers were given by different individuals. The persons most competent to answer the query did not give an expression to their thoughts. Those who do not teach are certainly the class to tell why they do not. Yet as we remember only one of this class, and he a teaching Elder, gave a reason why more members of the church of Christ do not strive to teach the Christian religion to the world. Some thought the love of money so universal now, swept men all into the vortex and excitement of trade. Others, that the failure to sustain the preachers as they should be sustained was the great trouble. We will not attempt to give the different suggestions made, but will give a few of our own ideas bearing on the subject.

In the first place, we think the teaching talent of the congregations are developed fully as well as their talents in other departments of duty and labor. The congregations are fully as

remiss in the practice of the Christian virtues as in preaching and teaching the world.

Preaching is vain without practice. When a family of Christ has been planted in a community, it should rely on a natural increase from its practice of the Christian virtues much more than on public teaching and persuasion to increase the family and extend the religion of the Savior. "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; having your conversation (behavior) honest among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. * * * For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men." 1st Peter 2:11-15.

Well doing, a practice that puts to silence opposition, that commands the respect of the world, that woos the humble and true, is heaven's ordained means for spreading the religion in a community in which the church is once planted. We have but little faith in anything else benefitting the world or building the church up in faith and love.

The apostle Paul, Ephesians 4th, 11-12, says, "He gave some, apostles; some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry (the ministering to the poor), for the edifying of the body of Christ." The specific work of a church is to perfect the saints, in knowledge, that they may be perfected in walk and character for relieving the necessities (the work of the ministry is the work of service, not of preaching) and edifying or building the body of Christ or the church. This last may include all the teaching needful to instruct the alien into the kingdom, and to teach the Christian to deport himself properly in the kingdom.

After a church is planted, the idea of retaining a man to

preach constantly for that congregation is foreign to the whole scope of biblical teaching. The church in its several members should be put to work and by this work or exercise of the members it should make increase to the building itself up in love. This is the Scriptural idea, and was the primitive order. The apostles planted churches, put them to work—went elsewhere, planted others and after awhile returned to see how they did, to confirm, establish and strengthen them, or they sent others well instructed to set in order the things that might be wanting or neglected in the worship or work of these congregations.

They, the members, were to edify one another, exhort one another, admonish one another, watch over one another, confess their faults to each other, and pray one for another that their sins might he healed. No priestly head on earth could do all the exhortation, admonition, watching over the flock of God—hear all confessing of sins or do the praying for the remission of sins.

The worship and the work of the church, in which every member bears a part, are heaven's ordained means for developing the spiritual life and strength of each member and of the whole church. Preaching or teaching never yet made a man a Christian. He may thus be taught *how* to become a Christian. Theories on farming never made a man a farmer, doing the work of the farm makes the farmer.

The end to be attained in our churches is not to induce them to support preachers to continually lecture them and do their work and worship for them, but to induce the members to do their own work and worship, and so strengthen every member and build up a compact, solid working body of Christ.

Whenever a congregation gives more means to support a preacher or teacher to minister to it, than it gives to relieve the poor and the afflicted of earth, it shows a much higher regard for the theory than the practice of the Christian religion.

Preaching is presenting the theory, and meeting together on the Lord's day for mutual edification and praise, and relieving the distresses of the poor and the afflicted in the name of Christ present the practice of the religion of the Savior. Those who are attracted by the theory are very prone to make mere theorists. Those who are drawn by the practice will come to work; as they work they will grow, and daily find more and more pleasure and joy in the service of the Lord. Those who are attracted by the theory will be theorists only, their interest in this, can only be of a partizan or sectarian nature. When party zeal and excitement wane their interest in religion ceases.

It is the duty of a teacher (there are really no preachers in our land in the Bible sense of the term) when planting a church, to remain with them and teach them to worship and work as God directs. But he can never successfully do this, by himself, continually doing all the speaking, exhorting, praying, etc.

No more can he do this, than a man can make a carpenter by lecturing to a youth on the principles of carpentry. In this case, to make a successful carpenter, he must put him to work, let him learn to use the tools, practice the art. His mistakes in the labor under the correction of a good carpenter, as well as his successes, become the occasions of his improvement.

So the teacher in the beginning should instruct and tutor the congregation, by putting every member to work, correcting tenderly the mistakes, restraining gently the forward, and encouraging the diffident, as a wise father does his own children. In after years the Elders should continually endeavor to utilize the talent and ability of every member of the church. Should not think of always conducting the worship. Should vary and diversify it to suit the talent and knowledge of the different classes of members, should encourage every member to do something. They should make every one feel he has a part in the church, in its work and worship. It will give him interest in the congregational worship. The condition and welfare of each

member ought to be inquired after, every member ought to be given something to do in the work of the church. This will be a thousand fold more effective in interesting them than hearing a lecture on the theory or philosophy of religion from the most eloquent. It commits publicly each member to the worship and work of God. It makes each one feel he or she is responsible for the condition of the congregation, the effectiveness of the work, and the interest of the worship. It will cause each one thus feeling the responsibility, to interest one in the worship at least, if that one is himself.

It is God's order that his church should meet on the Lord's day. Should thus engage steadfastly in the worship, "in the apostles' doctrine or teaching, in breaking of bread, in the fellowship and in prayers." Each should bear his part. God gives blessing and strength only through his own appointments as he has given them. Change these, substitute something else for these and we drive out God's strength and blessing and substitute therefor man's weakness. In God's appointments, however weak they may appear, when properly observed, God's power dwells, through them his blessing flows. In man's institutions, however strong and wise they may appear, only man's weakness resides. In the worship of God, properly conducted, every member zealously performing his or her part as the Lord directs, God's blessing dwells and in coming to it the humble seeker after good is blessed.

Substitute the finest sermon in the world for this simple divine worship and weakness to the individuals and to the church is the result. The giving it a mere subordinate position to something else is not according to divine order. One man doing all the exhorting to an audience, feeling it has nothing to do but to listen to the preacher, is killing to the life, energy and vitality of the church. God's order cannot be perverted or destroyed without evil results.

The first important work of the church, that which is the

necessary foundation for success in every other work, is the perfection of the saints in their knowledge, walk and character. They must cease to seek happiness in the fleshly, sensua1 pleasures of life, but must seek it in restraining these and following Christ in righteousness and true holiness. Descending to particulars, the apostle announces that the Christian must not lie, but be truthful, control the temper, resist the devil, cease to steal, be industrious in that which is good, economical, and kind to the poor. The speech must be pure and free from evil, but that which edifies and benefits the hearers. Must not grieve the Holy Spirit but avoiding bitterness, wrath, clamor, evil speaking and all malice, must be gentle, tender-hearted, forgiving each other as God for Christ's sake forgave us. This work of thus purifying and perfecting the saints, stands ahead of all other work in or by the church and is the true foundation of successful labor of every other kind and character. It is more important and stands before preaching the gospel. The preaching is vain without this work as a solid foundation to give it force. After this work in importance and position and growing out of it, is the work of the ministry.

In the New Testament are two distinct works called the work of the ministry. The work or ministry of the evangelist, preaching the gospel, the work or ministry of service or the deaconship, the feeding the poor, the needy, the visiting the sick, those in prison and afflicted, and ministering to the wants of the suffering. This latter is the character of work of the ministry referred to in this verse. Every Christian in good health, living as the Spirit directs, will be industrious, economical, will avoid debt and entanglements of uncertain character, which bring harassment and trouble, will live plainly and comfortably, living thus, will in addition to what will supply his own wants, have something to spare. The rule of the Spirit will infallibly bring this, to all who heed its teaching. They will have to contribute to the treasury of the Lord as they are prospered.

Each member sacredly doing this, a treasury will grow; the

use of this as directed by the Spirit is first to relieve the poor of the household of faith, then of all in the community. This is the true work of the ministry. The work second in importance and position in the church of God. This work is more important than preaching, because on it depends the value and success of all preaching. Bringing individuals into a church that is neglecting these works will not benefit them.

The third division of labor, or grand purpose of the church is to edify or build up, the body of Christ. As one of the means to the accomplishment of this Work, God has ordained what is popularly termed, preaching, more properly; teaching and admonishing the world. The true success of this teaching depends upon the church's faithfully performing these previous works. Whenever this order of work is reversed or the relative importance perverted, the efficiency of the church is destroyed and weakened. When the church is weakened, every member is debilitated and disabled from labor also. The effort then to improperly exalt the position of the preacher, to unduly magnify his work, really weakens the preacher and destroys his efficiency for good.

Should a man attempt to develope one member of his body disproportionably to or without the concurrent development of the whole body, he would fail, the neglect of the body and the other members would certainly bring weakness and debility to the member whose growth was sought. Or if he succeeded in developing one member it would be useless, having only a weak and debilitated body to wield the member. This is the condition of many churches with reference to their preachers at the present day. We will try to seek in future numbers the reasons why more individuals do not teach the religion of the Savior, and why that teaching is not more effective.

D. L.

THE ONE-MAN PASTOR SYSTEM

In the *Gospel Advocate*, 1855–1909

Appendix

Although the following survey is not exhaustive, each of the 321 citations below contains a reference to the one-man pastor system in which disapproval of the practice is implied. While some references are mere passing comments, others are longer, reasoned arguments in opposition to the practice. Together, however, they support the conclusion that the practice was rejected by leaders of Churches of Christ throughout the period surveyed.

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—*B. D. Lewis*

EULOGY FOR W. CARL KETCHERSIDE, 1908–1989

(St. Louis, Mo. May 28, 1889)

Leroy Garrett

Restoration Review **(June 1889): 108–111.**

Appendix

What a beautiful tribute this is to a great and good man! If all those around the world were here who would like to be here, we could fill Busch Stadium, empty it and fill it again, for Carl Ketcherside has been a great blessing to thousand and tens of thousands during his long ministry. He started preaching when he was but a boy of 12. He would have to stand on a box when he spoke so he could be seen behind the pulpit. He's told me how he received several invitations following his very first sermon. When an elder from a nearby church invited him to his congregation, he told him, "Sorry, brother Jones, I'm all booked up!" Twelve years old! This man has served in the ministry of the word for seventy years.

They also tell the story on young Carl that when he tried to get on a train wearing a cap and knee pants, telling the conductor that he was going on a preaching appointment, the conductor didn't believe his story, and, supposing he might be a runaway, wouldn't let him board. His mother had to come to the station and confirm his story.

You are a part of history by attending Carl Ketcherside's funeral, for this man has had such an impact on his world and brought freedom and hope to so many people that he will not soon be forgotten nor will his influence soon fade. Historians will one day be researching and evaluating his life and work.

But this is not a mere funeral. We are here to worship God. And it is a celebration, Carl's homegoing! I have heard him say it often, that when we leave this world we are not leaving home but going home. We do not sorrow as those who have no hope.

But we do sorrow and we will miss him terribly. The poet Edwin Markham spoke for us all when he likened the passing of a great soul to the fall of a mighty tree in the forest.

He went down

As when a lordly cedar, green with boughs,

Goes down with a great shout upon the hills,

And leaves a lonesome place against the sky.

A mighty tree has fallen and there is a lonesome place against the sky. We are here not only to honor a dear friend and brother who has left our midst but also to show our love and respect to those who were closest to him. These are his son Jerry and his wife Emily, and his daughter Sharon Sue Burton and her husband Curt. There are also four grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Sitting with the family is also Fran Woodside, who had a special relationship with Carl and who is deeply grieved. (This woman and Carl were engaged to be married later this year.)

We realize that there is a lonesome place in your sky today and we are here to assure you of our love and to offer our condolences.

I speak a word about Carl Ketcherside today in four ways: a favorite poem of his, a favorite Scripture, a favorite story, and a favorite promise.

I have seen Carl stand before numerous audiences that were somewhat suspicious of him due to his broader views of Christian fellowship, and he would sometimes quote these pungent lines, again from Edwin Markham:

He drew a circle that shut me out —

Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.

But Love and I had the wit to win;

We drew a circle that took him in.

These lines tell the story of Carl's ministry as a peacemaker amongst divided Christians. When others would draw their circles and leave him out, he conspired with Love and drew a circle that took them in. He travelled all over this country and in foreign nations as an apostle of unity, sounding the refrain, "Wherever God has a child I have a brother or sister." He insisted that we have no right to make anything a test of fellowship that God has not made a condition for going to heaven. He had a neat way of saying to those who doubted him, "You may not agree with what I am saying, but I am going to love you and accept you as my brothers and sisters in Christ nonetheless, and there's not much you can do about that." He helped multiplied thousands to escape the bondage of legalism and sectarianism and gave them hope for a more loving and united church.

One of Carl's favorite Scriptures was Acts 13:36, and I think he viewed it as reflective of his own philosophy of life: "David, after he had served his own generation according to the will of God, fell asleep."

Doesn't that one little line speak volumes about what our lives in this troubled world are to be about? David, a mighty king and an elegant poet though he was, resolved to stay busy doing God's will among his own people and in his own generation. He did not try to live in the past nor did he worry about the future. He did what he could on a day-to-day basis, following God the best he knew how, among his own people in his own time, and then fell asleep. That was Carl. How is this for a full and happy life? You are 81 years young. You come in at 10 o'clock at night after being out there amongst them all day as you have done all those years. You kneel beside your bed and commit your soul to God's safe keeping. You get in bed and go to sleep — and wake up in heaven! That's not bad! Carl not only showed us how to live but how to die, if we can manage it.

Carl served his own generation by serving his family, by serving the church, and by serving the world. He wrote between 180 to 200 letters a month, year after year, to people all over the world, helping them with their personal problems and encouraging them in the work of the Lord. He authored 28 books (or is it 35?), sent out *Mission Messenger* **for 37 years, and preached tens of thousands of times on college and university campuses, in homes, under tents and brush arbors, in the streets, as well as in churches. He seemed to have loved his inner-city work most of all. He enjoyed writing about how many blankets they had given to the poor, or if summer how many electric fans. When I had extolled his virtues in** *Restoration Review,* **he wrote to me, "Your estimate of me embarrasses me. If I can leave this interesting world with the goodwill of the poor and needy that I am with everyday, I shall be pleased."**

A favorite story of his, coming from Nathaniel Hawthorne, is also reflective of Carl's life and work. There was this village alongside a craggy mountain that was so cleft that it bore the image of a man's face which came to be known as Old Stone Face. There was a tradition in the village that one would come someday, bearing the likeness of Old Stone Face, who would be a

blessing to the village. A little boy in that village, named Ernest, was especially attracted to the Old Stone Face. He studied it with boyhood awe as he made his way to school each day, and then again when he returned. He often looked upon that stone face, wondering when one would come to his village in its likeness. When a famous philanthropist came to town, the boy thought he might be the Old Stone Face since he was so liberal with his money, but he looked nothing like the stone face. Then came an important politician and Ernest thought that surely this would be he, but neither did he bear any resemblance.

Years passed and the boy grew to manhood and at last became an old man, but all those years he never ceased to study the Old Stone Face. But no one ever came to the village bearing its image. Then one evening when he was sitting with a neighbor on the porch, the neighbor looked to the distant mountain at the Old Stone Face, and then fixed his gaze upon the old man as he sat in his rocking chair. "Ernest," cried the neighbor, *"You* are the Old Stone Face!

Hawthorne's point was that we become like what we give our heart and life to, whether something beautiful or something not so beautiful.

And that brings us to one of Carl's favorite promises, found in 2 Cor. 3:18: "We all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord." The promise is that as we "look unto Jesus" and walk in the light as he is in the light we become more and more like him. We reflect the Lord's glory and are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory.

As a close friend for nearly 40 years I saw that transformation in Carl Ketcherside. From "glory to glory" he became more like the Christ that he loved and served. He became the Old Stone Face!

Once when we were studying the term glory, I remember his saying, "When the Lord says to me, 'Well done good and faithful servant,' that will be my glory."

Carl once told his family that he didn't want any crying at his funeral, but for them to gather around and sing "Amazing Grace." We are going to close this memorial by doing just that, with his grandson Gryfon leading *us.—Leroy Garrett*

(Those present at Hoffmeister Colonial Mortuary in St. Louis, hundreds of them, stood and sang "Amazing Grace" with glorious beauty and enthusiasm. It was an appropriate finale to a beautiful and enthusiastic life. Memorials may be sent to Cornerstone Fellowship, 3258 Ohio St., St. Louis, Mo., 63118)

GRAVE MARKER
FOR CARL AND NELL KETCHERSIDE

Appendix

Grave marker for Carl and Nell Ketcherside

Parkview Cemetery
(Located in St. Francois County, Missouri,
between the towns of Park Hills and Farmington,
about 80 miles south of St. Louis.)